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The SMART SET

*A Magazine of
Cleverness*



Through

"HELL"

to Peace

A Great Sensational Story of the Present War—
How American Brains vanquished Chaos and
compelled Peace.

By Donn Byrne



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THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF
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THE SMART SET FOR OCTOBER

Big Business is today as dominating a factor in the world of up-to-date activities as the Feudal System was five hundred years ago. Whatever our sphere of life, we cannot get away from its influence. Business occupies men's minds today as warfare did those of our ancestors. The great chieftains and feudal lords of the past have their counterparts in the modern captains of industry, whose power over their workmen is in many cases as great as that of a lord over his vassals.

This is emphasized strongly in **Edwin Balmer's** powerful story, "A Master of Men," which will be a feature of the October number of *THE SMART SET*. The ruthless energy and dominance of a great corporation head is brought out vividly, in contrast with, finally, a single instance in which his power breaks down and he makes a supreme sacrifice for his men. There is a universal appeal in this story, for there is no human being outside of a cloister to whom some of the elements of the plot will not strike home. It is a big story.

Another feature with a very poignant appeal will be **Christabel Lowndes Yates's** story of a poet—"Of Fire and Misty Dreams." The poet is one member of the human community that most of us fail to understand. Miss Yates senses his divine aspirations and his human shortcomings, and in this story gives a remarkable insight into the depths of a poet's nature.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has contributed something new to the stage in the one-act play, "Dawn," which will be a big *SMART SET* feature. This play is a product of the ideas of Conan Doyle and the dramatic technique of Percival L. Wilde, and is unusual to a high degree, in line with the dramatic offerings that have been appearing recently in *THE SMART SET*. Like "Little Face," which appears this month, "Dawn" is announced for early presentation at the Princess Theater, New York.

Hugh Walpole, of England, contributes a funny story to the October issue—"The Twisted Inn." The scene is laid in parts of the wild country of the interior of England, where the romantic wanderings of a young newspaper man lead him into strange adventures.

D. H. Lawrence, whose reputation is growing steadily with each piece of fiction that comes from his pen, will be represented in this issue by a strong story of present day married life called "The White Stocking." Lawrence's characters are alive; his action is rapid and tense.

The romantic story will not down; the lure of the old days "when knighthood was in flower" still exists. **Beulah Marie Dix's** story of love and adventure in the time of King Charles will no doubt make as great an appeal to readers as did her former story in a previous number of *THE SMART SET*.

Other fiction of the sort for which *THE SMART SET* is noted, which will appear in the October issue, will include:

"Love and Letters," by Catherine Carr, a story of a girl and a career.

"The Incalculable Element," by Cluny Gwynne, a story of love and politics.

There will be some distinctive verse by Bliss Carman, Louis Untermeyer, Hildegard Hawthorne, Richard Burton, Witter Bynner and others.



THE PHILOSOPHY OF SELECTION

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THE SMART SET

SMART—Clever; witty; acute; quick; lively.—*Webster's Dictionary.*

THE PEACEMAKER

By Alicia Ramsey

THERE are three things in this world which are indisputable:

All families have rows. All family rows are about love or money. All family rows are absurd.

In some families, however, they are better than absurd. They are a fine art. In the great family of Champney, whose pedigree went back in a direct line to Father Noah in his ark, they were the very breath of life.

They were born rowing. They rowed in their cradles when they were babies. They hit each other over the head in the nursery with their toys. They fought like wildcats when they were promoted to the schoolroom. When they grew up they quarreled night and day till they were married. When they were married, they suspended operations a bit and quarreled with their husbands and wives and any children that might be born to them, until, in the course of time, the husbands and wives and children went their several ways to death or damnation. Then they returned to the old home and quarreled madly among themselves again until they, in their turn, died.

As the centuries progressed, it became quite a tradition that no members of the Champney family should meet together without its ending in a row. If it was a christening, they rowed as to

what the baby's name should be; if it was a wedding, they rowed with the bride or the bridegroom over the settlements up to the church door; if it was a funeral—they were great at funerals—they rowed about the will.

They were all rich, the Champneys; they all had great family mansions stuffed full of the most exciting and valuable things, but that made no difference to them! To see them screaming at each other in the family library after a funeral was a sight for the gods. They cursed the dead and they cursed the living. They swore at the family lawyer and they invariably tried to upset the will; the fathers would turn their sons out of the house, rowing about a few square yards of land that neither of them wanted; the mothers and daughters parted forever over a torn sampler or a Berlin wool cushion; the brothers and sisters quarreled to the death for the sake of a Sheffield plated tea tray or a silver spoon.

Another remarkable thing about them was the way they stuck together. No matter how they hated each other, no matter how they rowed, they held together through thick and thin. Woe betide any outsider who, for his own advantage or their benefit, strove to interfere with them. In an instant all family quarrels were wiped out, and the poor

wretch who had counted on dealing with isolated members of the family who had not spoken to each other for years, was suddenly confronted by a malicious-eyed, vinegar-tongued, immovably consolidated clan, whose one thought appeared to be how best to utilize their united force to sweep down and annihilate the upstart nonentity who had dared to imagine he could interfere with *them*.

The result of these two overwhelming characteristics—their quarreling and their clannishness—naturally resulted in their intermarrying to an enormous extent. No matter how much money they had—and they all had money; no matter how good-looking they were—and they were all good-looking; no matter how many love affairs they had—and they all had love affairs; they generally ended by marrying among themselves. It wasn't so much that other people were afraid to marry the Champneys as that the Champneys couldn't find people they thought were good enough to marry them.

At the beginning of things this didn't much matter. In the old days when it was the fashion to have twelve or fifteen children, the clan waxed fat and prospered. When they met on great occasions it was more like the mustering of an army than the gathering of a family. There was a tradition that in the time of the first Edward, the Champneys, foregathering at a funeral, had marched after the coffin over two thousand strong. There was also a tradition to the effect that only one thousand nine hundred and ninety had returned from the funeral, ten having killed each other quarreling who should bury the dead. That by the way, however. Suffice it to say that the picture representing the ceremony, which hung in the great hall at Shortlands where the head of the family lived, showed the coffin shoved under an apple tree in the corner to the right, the entire center occupied by a small army of men with waving plume and silver armor bashing each other gaily on the head in the middle, and a party of ladies in high headdresses and long veils scratching each other's faces to the left.

That picture was the rallying point of the Champney family. It was the one thing on earth over which they couldn't quarrel. It descended from father to son in a direct line, and where the picture hung, be it garret or palace, there the head of the family was. It was their patent of nobility, the bridge by which they spanned the abyss of history; it was their fetish and their God. They would have shed the last drop of their blood to protect it. It was whispered, indeed, by a terrified connection by marriage, whose presence (on sufferance) was permitted at an anniversary, that, coming unawares into the library at midnight, he had found the entire family assembled before it on their knees.

So, for a time, the great clan of Champney prospered. They fought and they quarreled and they stuck together, and, like all things which unite, they rapidly increased. They increased in beauty—all the Champney women were beautiful; they increased in strength—all the Champney men were strong; they increased in riches—all the Champneys had the knack of acquiring wealth.

They beggared themselves for their king and they died for their country, and wherever they were, and whatever they did, they preserved the family tradition; they quarreled and they intermarried for four hundred years without a break, from the time of the great King Edward down to the coming of Queen Anne.

With the entry of the Georges, the prosperity of the Champney family seemed to wane. They ran to sons rather than to daughters, and in those turbulent times, when war was raging in all quarters of Europe, death took an undue toll of men. Wherever there was war, there also were the Champneys. No matter what the position of the army, the Champneys were always found in front. The stone walls of the family chapel, indeed, had to be encroached upon right up to the altar to find room for the stupendous list of family names.

Such things make for family glory but they do not make for prolific issue.

So it was with the Champneys.

What with the men dying off like flies (or, rather, hornets!), and the women childless, or unmarried, the great clan dwindled and dwindled until, with the ushering in of the twentieth century, their great possessions had passed away from them and they were represented by only three men and three women, one of whom had ceased to bear the family name.

They still preserved the Champney tradition. They stuck together and they quarreled when there were only six of them, just as they had stuck together and quarreled when they were two thousand strong.

Owing, doubtless, to the family habit of intermarrying, the family type had preserved itself just as strongly in face as in mind.

But for the fact that he wore a tweed suit by Poole and gaiters, and his ancestor had a saucepan on his head and was dressed in chain armor, the Head of the Family, standing on the hearthrug in the library at Shortlands, tearing at the bell, was the exact facsimile in face and stature of the gentleman who, with a hatchet in one hand and a pike in the other, was genially employed in slicing open some kinsman's head.

The face of the first Edwardian Champney was a fearful scarlet. So was the face of the Head of the Family as he stood on the hearthrug in Edward the Seventh's reign. The scarlet face, by the way, was also a family tradition. It was the first joyous signal to the other Champneys that there was about to be a family row.

John Champney tore at the bell, and he cursed it until the servant answered it. Then he dropped the bell and cursed the servant instead. The servants were also a part of the Champney tradition. Even in these degenerate days, when all their neighbors were cajoling and entreating and bribing their maids and their footmen to stay with them, the Champneys bullied their underlings, swore at them, screamed at them, tyrannized over them, kept them on short rations and bad wages and housed them like pigs, but they kept them from

the day they entered their service to the day they died.

"Why the devil didn't you come when I rang the bell?" John Champney stormed at the footman who at the first tinkle of the bell had come tearing up the steps six at a time.

"I came the instant the bell rang, sir."

"That's a lie. I've been ringing this infernal thing for the last ten minutes. Don't tell me you came when you heard it! Reading, I suppose, or snoring in your pantry. I know you! A lazy, idle, good-for-nothing lot . . ." He banged his clenched fist on the great oak mantelpiece until the bronze candlesticks jumped with joy and the footman shook in his shoes.

"I assure you, sir," he began, but his master wouldn't listen to him.

"Don't you dare to answer me," he stormed. "If you open your mouth, you'll leave. If I say you didn't come, you didn't. I want Miss Margaret. She's to come down this instant. And if I catch you slouching again in this infernal—"

The wretched servant didn't wait to hear the end of the roaring. He fled.

The Head of the Family was, as the Champney men always were, a splendid specimen of a man. He stood six foot three in his socks, and the head of his shoulders was still gloriously good-looking in spite of his age. He'd a fine nose—all the Champneys had fine noses—blue eyes—all the Champneys had blue eyes—set wide apart, that flashed and sparkled and shone like blue fire. He was clean-shaven and his well cut mouth clenched itself together over his excellent white teeth—all the Champneys had beautiful white teeth—like a trap. His mop of white curls gave the finishing touch of extraordinary good looks to the furious old man.

He stood on the hearthrug with his back to the fire, and his two thousand ancestors looked down upon him with supreme content. Here was the perfect type of Champney personified—roaring, raging; summoning the offender to his presence, to be annihilated; a Champney every inch of him, spoiling for a fight.

Upstairs, in the charming old room known as the Ladies' Boudoir, sat the three Champney women quarreling to their hearts' delight. A piece of work lay on the table between them on which was designed an inoffensive little bird. One wanted his wing embroidered green, the other wanted it brown and the third wanted it peacock blue. Quite enough matter there for a Champney to row about! As a matter of fact, they were at it hammer and tongs when the footman interrupted them by coming into the room.

"The General would like to see you, Miss Margaret."

"Tell him I can't come," answered his young mistress, who hadn't the slightest intention of relinquishing her share in an unhopd-for family treat.

"How dare you send such a message down to your grandfather?" snapped her Aunt Charlotte. She was the only unmarried Champney, and ruled her brother's house, as her mother had ruled it before her, with a rod of iron.

"Why should she go if she doesn't want to?" cried the second woman, also an aunt, who, a rich widow, had returned with joyful fury to her brother's house.

"I don't intend to," said her niece.

All three of them bent over the cloth again, snatching it from each other.

"The General's in the library, Miss Margaret."

"In the library!"

"Why didn't you say so at once?"

"That means there's going to be a row!"

The three women dropped the cloth and stared at each other.

"I'll go down and see what the row's about."

"I'll come, too, Margaret, and see that your grandfather doesn't get the better of you."

"I don't want either of you," snapped Margaret Dalrymple. "I'm not afraid of grandpapa. However, the more row the better. Come if you want to. I don't care!"

The cloth, no longer needed as a pretext for quarreling, fell to the floor. The girl flung up her head, left her two aunts raving at each other and, her beautiful

face already flushing from white to an ominous scarlet, flounced out of the room.

II

INTO the library she marched and banged the door. She advanced on the terrific figure on the hearthrug with no more hesitation than if she had been going to poke the fire. "What do you want, grandpapa?"

"I've had a letter—a preposterous, impertinent, infernal letter—from a preposterous, impertinent, infernal young jackanapes, whose name is— I don't know what the devil his name is," he roared.

"I do, grandpapa. You needn't trouble to look for the letter. I presume you are alluding to Reggie."

"Reggie! How dare you call him Reggie? How dare you know anything about the letter? How dare you call him anything at all?"

"Why shouldn't I know him?"

"Because he's not fit for you to know."

"Yes, he is! I'm going to marry him."

"You're not."

"I am."

"You shan't."

"I shall."

"I'm the head of this family, and I say you shan't. If you do, I'll cut you off with a shilling. I'll turn you out of my house."

"Yes, as you turned my mother out before me. It didn't stop her going, and it won't stop me."

The splendid old face went from scarlet to purple and from purple back to white. It was true he had turned this girl's mother, his daughter, out of the house. It was also true that the Champneys loved as madly as they hated. He had turned his daughter out, but he had loved her. The mere mention of her name was like the thrust of a red hot poker into the raw hide of a wounded bull. "I've made up my mind, and I'll give you two minutes to make up yours. You give up this man or you go."

"I don't want the two minutes. I'll go."

The old man and the young girl, who

adored each other with a passion that was their common inheritance from the dead woman who had loved them both, glared at each other mad with fury.

At this terrific moment the door opened and William Champney came in.

By one of those delightful anomalies beloved of the student of heredity, in every generation of these fighting, quarreling, raging Champneys there was always one who loved peace.

In the dawning of the family history, this one, as a matter of course, was always dedicated to the church. He was looked upon as the ugly duckling of the Champney family, tolerated only because he was a Champney—so they did the best they could for him. There was no place for him in the roystering, bawling clan, so, as they could not make him a soldier, they naturally made him a priest. For a century or two the family legend had it that the Champneys hated their peace-loving kinsman with a deadly hatred and hid him away in his monastery as a kind of disgrace.

He was a blot on the family escutcheon, but they found him useful. He baptized them, married them and buried them, and when they were dead he prayed for their souls.

It was, no doubt, owing to their grudging gratitude for this last accomplishment, that the peacemakers of the Champney family gradually began to form a tradition of their own. If it was useful to have a near relation who was a saint when you were dead, it was not altogether a drawback to have a near relation who, when all the other members of your family ran away from you, was not afraid to stay beside you and nurse you through the plague when you were alive. Further, to have a kinsman who followed you into battle with a long stick with a cross stuck on the top, who gave you water to drink when you were wounded and kept Satan away when you were asleep, was also not to be entirely despised. It came, indeed, as quite a pleasant shock to the family, when, under the great Henry, the peacemaker, defying the raging Tudor, slapped his reformed mass book upon the table, and having told his royal master the truth as

to his domestic arrangements with a fury worthy of his name, went happily cursing that great Mormon to the Smithfield stakes.

That Champney it was who cemented the peacemaking Champney tradition. It began to dawn on the great clan that to die for what one believed to be right might possibly hurt as much as to die for what one knew to be wrong. They began to be rather proud of their ugly duckling. In the course of a century or two they began even to tell him their troubles. It was recorded that one weak-kneed, chicken-hearted Champney actually consulted his priestly brother as to whether, given three enemies, a man might with honor be satisfied if he killed only two. It is true that the priest advised him to kill only one, and the anxious inquirer, to put himself right with the other Champneys, killed four. Still a new tradition was established, and from thence onward, in times of stress in the family history, it became the custom to apply to the peacemaker for advice. That they never took it didn't alter the amazing fact that they asked for it.

It was at the Battle of the Boyne, however, that the peacemaking member of the family came to be really recognized. Following his seven brothers into the battle, according to the established tradition, with a crucifix in his pocket in case of emergency instead of a cross on the head of a stick, it chanced that a select circle of patrician-nosed, blue-eyed giants found themselves in the responsible position of being of personal service to the King. Needless to say, it was a service that involved considerable personal danger. Needless also to say that, before it was settled which of the seven should undertake it, there had to be a family row. While the quarrel went on the King waited, and the seven Champneys, having ragged themselves nearly dead, came to earth to find that the peacemaker with his crucifix in his pocket had performed that deed of desperate valor for them and had saved the King. Incidentally the peacemaking Champney was blown to bits. They picked up the pieces, carried them shoulder high, hewing, slashing, thrust-

ing, stabbing, right through the enemies' ranks, which parted before their onslaught like sheaves of wheat before a flail. The whole family, then dwindled down to eight hundred, came from all parts of the world to attend his funeral. Five of his nearest relations quarreled to the death as to the division of his rosary, and two of his brothers fought a duel which was fatal to both as to which of them was entitled to his cross. These trivial incidents apart, however, another family tradition was formed. From that time the peacemaker of the Champney family was not only made use of, consulted and revered; he was also loved.

To say that John Champney, the soldier, loved his brother William, the priest, was to put it very mildly. He loved him with that passionate ardor that the strong feel for the weak; he loved him with that awe-inspired devotion that the bad feel for the good; most of all, he loved him with that mystic passion that so often unites sinners and saints. As boys they had been inseparable, the little William panting after the heroic John, the heroic John staying his mighty hunting, swimming, jumping and shooting to accommodate his whirlwind forces to the exactions of the little William's tender hands and delicate legs.

When John was going to be thrashed, William would cry himself into a fever until the sin was condoned. When William was ill, John would stop in with him, giving up shooting the crows with a catapult, thieving the peaches off the south wall, climbing the branch of the giant oak which was broken, even denying himself the joy of diving into the forbidden mill stream, though he had sworn to one of the stable hands who had done it that he would also. Once, indeed, when William lay sick unto death of scarlet fever, a neighboring cousin, who had ridden over on behalf of his mother for news, incited John to join him in an expedition in his father's sailing boat, down the most dangerous part of the river, to shoot wild ducks at dawn with forbidden guns. When John refused, the cousin went so far as to call him a curate to his face.

John seized the opportunity to bribe

Providence by promising not to knock his cousin's head off if only William might get well. Providence accepted the bribe and John kept his promise. It was frail little William, who, when he heard of that terrific tragedy, rose from his sick bed, saddled his pony, took French leave of his terrified nurses and was later found placidly watching by the motionless body of his cousin, whose nose was broken and who had fainted from loss of blood.

They had only had two quarrels, the brothers—the first when William had announced his intention of going into the church, the second when John had turned his daughter Margaret out of the house. It was, indeed, only when the little orphan Margaret had arrived, the image of her dead mother, that William, beholding his brother's agony, had found it in his heart to forgive John.

It was probably the remembrance of that agony of reconciliation that made the child so unspeakably dear to them both. It was, however, not her endearing ways, her pretty aptitudes and the startling beauty of her face, which recalled the best Champney traditions, that called forth this passion of affection, but the stupendous fact that she would inherit all the great Champney possessions and that they looked to her to bring forth men children who should carry on the family name.

It, therefore, went without the saying that, while she was yet screaming in her cradle for her bottle and yelling the nursery down in howling altercations with her nurses and her doll, her future was settled for her. Other less fortunate young women might mate as they pleased. For Margaret Dalrymple there was only one possible husband, a distant cousin, said to be a parson of low church proclivities occupying himself in bullying the gentle heathen into the ways of Christianity in the purlieus of Madras.

Owing to a feud engendered by a silver gilt teapot with an amber spout, his mother had quarreled to the death with the family and had departed with her offspring, then an infant in arms, to India, where she had stayed. The fam-

ily, therefore, had never actually seen their relation, which, judging from the photographs of the snub-nosed, chinless youth which arrived from time to time, seemed to be just as well. Still, though the Champneys might secretly deplore his lack of personal charm and attraction, that was a matter of small moment beside the fact that, though unhappily out of the direct line of succession, he and his mother before him bore the family name.

Unfortunately, Margaret Dalrymple did not like parsons. Moreover, together with the traditional beauty of the women of her family, she inherited their love for family rows. If the chinless Madras parson had been a Greek god fallen out of high heaven and her people had ordered her to marry him, from sheer inherited perversity she would have refused.

This being so, it followed of course that the man she had set her heart on—a blue-eyed young scapegrace of insignificant family and less fortune—was the man of all men in the world of whom her people disapproved.

She met him at a ball, scratched all the other men's names off her program and danced with him all the evening. Coming down the stairs to put her into her carriage, he proposed to her. As a fitting climax to a glorious row which followed that night in her bedroom with her Aunt Charlotte who was chaperoning her, she announced that Reggie Carew and she were engaged. Next morning she accepted him over the telephone. It is, indeed, not unlikely that she would have eloped with him later that same morning if her Uncle William had not intervened.

It was in her blood to consult her uncle, so she consulted him as a matter of course. Also as a matter of course she hadn't the slightest intention of taking his advice. When she found herself doing what he told her to, no one was more astounded than she.

Now William Champney was a priest who ought to have been a statesman. The secret of his choice of a calling he had never confided even to his brother. It lay locked in the profound and not

entirely untroubled depths of his own heart. He had loved the same woman as John Champney—might, indeed, have won her, for he inherited his full share of his ancestors' great stature and the family's good looks—but when he realized that to reach his own happiness he must use his brother's heart as his stepping stone, he preferred to trample on his own.

He did his trampling like a true Champney. He retired from the malignant eyes of his family and quietly trampled it to death.

When he emerged from his retreat he had taken his vows, and it was as a priest and not as a man that, on the day of the wedding, he joined the hand of the brother whom he adored to the hand of the woman he loved.

Small wonder, then, that he loved his niece Margaret, who, under different circumstances, might have been a granddaughter of his own.

Into the safeguarding of her exquisite youth he threw all the wisdom of the statesman that he might have been; all the ardor that was born in him and that he had deliberately killed. He pleaded, commanded, cajoled, entreated, until by sheer brilliancy of personal magnetism he overcame the girl. She consented to see more of her lover before she became actually engaged.

III

For three months, therefore, the young people met continually. They flirted, danced, dined together at the various great mansions which opened their hospitable doors to them both, and at the end of the probationary period Margaret Dalrymple announced to her dismayed uncle that his three months of subtle endeavor to part them had but served to confirm the wisdom of her own choice.

The effect of this announcement on William Champney was terrific. He gauged by his own emotion what the effect on his brother would be. With all the eloquence of a born Champney—they were all eloquent, the Champneys,

when they were in love or in a rage—he painted a picture of the terrors awaiting her and begged for further delay.

Margaret Dalrymple, however, would have none of it.

"I love Reggie and I'm going to marry him. If grandpapa doesn't like it, he can lump it. *I don't care.*"

"Your grandfather hasn't been well, Margaret," pleaded her uncle.

"Then this news will cure him," responded his niece blithely. "Nothing in the world does grandpapa so much good as a jolly good row."

William Champney shuddered. He, who had seen so many tragedies smiting his family asunder, asked his trembling heart what the end of this "jolly good row" was likely to be!

"Margaret," he said solemnly, "do you realize that if you do not marry your cousin the name of Champney may die out forever?"

"And a jolly good job, too," responded his niece amiably. "They're beasts, and except for Aunt Julia and you I'm sick to death of the very name." She was nothing of the kind, but she couldn't help saying it. The words burned in her mouth until they were out. She'd rather have been a Champney than the Queen of England, but, as someone else was standing up for the family, it naturally followed that she felt herself obliged to run them down.

"Margaret," retorted her uncle with equal passion, "there have been Champneys at Shortlands for over eight centuries. Isn't it worth some sacrifice on your side to keep up the glorious tradition of our name?"

"Glorious tradition be blowed!" said his niece cheerfully. "I'm a woman, Uncle William, not a family tree."

"And your cousin's a man," pleaded her uncle.

"No, he isn't; he's a curate!" Her beautiful mouth trembled and the corners went down. "And a low church curate at that. I wonder at you, Uncle William, wanting me to marry a Protestant!"

"Your cousin may make you a good husband even if he is a Protestant."

"Yes, darling, but even if I'm a

Catholic I shan't make him a good wife."

"Why not?"

"I hate him!"

"Why? You've never seen him."

Margaret Dalrymple smiled radiantly. "I've seen his photo; that's quite enough."

"His photos mayn't do him justice."

"I don't care if they don't; I hate him all the same."

"But why, Margaret?"

"Oh, for lots of reasons."

"Give me one."

"He's an undersized little beast—five feet nine."

"Absurd!"

"His eyes are brown."

"Margaret!"

"His nose has a bump in the middle, and I *know* his feet are flat."

William Champney trembled with indignation. Eight centuries of traditions to be placed in such hands as these! "Have you no respect for your family?"

"Not a scrap." Then, observing the real distress on his delicate face, her heart melted. She stole a caressing arm round his neck. "I put it to you, Uncle William, do I *look* like a curate's wife? I shouldn't say no if he was a great big giant with flaming blue eyes and a lovely nose like you."

William Champney went white to the lips. In the old, old days her grandmother had said exactly the same things to him, with just the same gay laughter in her eyes and just the same caressing tone in her voice. He put her arms from his neck. "This is no laughing matter, Margaret," he said severely. "This proposed marriage of yours is impossible."

"Why? What's the matter with Reggie? He's young."

"Nonsense."

"He comes of a good family."

"Good family!"

"Well, Uncle William, everybody can't come out of the ark! At least you can't deny that he's good-looking."

"Margaret, what have looks got to do with it?"

"Lots, if he's to be my husband! I'm not taking any flat feet and noses with bumps in the middle for *my* sons." Her

frankness was another family tradition. The Champney women talked about their future progeny with the same affable ease that other women discussed their hats and shoes.

"Margaret," said William Champney solemnly, "if you continue this mad idea, your grandfather's death may lie at your door."

The girl's delicious laughter pealed through the room. "*My* death is much more likely to lie at *his*!"

William Champney shuddered. "Child! It's in your grandfather's power to will every penny of money away from you."

"Let him will it then! *I* don't care."

That was Champney all over. A rent roll of eighty thousand a year and possessions that had before now been the envy of kings! She didn't give them even a thought.

She swept her uncle a little curtsey, tossed up her head and went to the door.

"Margaret," her uncle called to her in an agony, "where are you going?"

"To telephone Reggie to write to grandpapa that we're engaged."

Thanks to this conversation, William Champney knew at a glance when he came into the library next morning what had occurred. On his heels followed his two sisters, who, in true Champney fashion, had scented the row from afar and had come to join in. No need for any explanation—the Champneys were all quick-witted when it came to quarreling; they took in the situation at a glance.

"What!" screamed Charlotte Champney. "Refuse to marry your cousin! You shall never have a penny of my money, not if you starve!"

"I've never had a penny yet, Aunt Charlotte," snapped her niece, "so I shan't miss it. I don't want your beastly money. You'd better leave it to found a convent!" She laughed maliciously. Charlotte Champney was the only unmarried woman of the family within the memory of man who had not given herself and her money to the church.

"Be quiet, Margaret," stormed her

Aunt Julia. "I'll stand by you whatever you do."

"Thanks, Aunt Julia. I'm quite capable of standing by myself." A fact which was unhappily most obviously true. The girl threw up her beautiful head and glared at her relations. "It's no good your screaming at me," she said furiously; "I'm going to marry Reggie. I've made up my mind."

"And I've made up my mind." Her grandfather thrust his great body forward over the table round which they stood, a grandly dominant figure despite his rage. "I'll have no more talking. You give up this young blackguard or you leave the house."

"Then I'll leave the house." Margaret Dalrymple, her cheeks flaming and her eyes like blue fires, stood and hurled defiance at her family. "So now you've all had your say and there's an end of it. I'll go and pack."

"But I haven't had *my* say." William Champney seized hold of the girl's arm like a vise. His face, usually ascetic and white, had also flushed to the ominous scarlet of the family rage. "There are only six of us Champneys left, including the boy in Madras. We've been a great race, and now it seems we're coming, like all things in this world, to our appointed end. Be that as it may, I will be no party to this quarrel. This child is the child of her dead mother, who, for the love of a man, was cut off from her people and turned out of this house. Had it not been for her pride which broke our hearts, and our pride which broke hers, she might have been living today and have given us sons and grandsons to carry on our name. I have always felt it to be God's judgment upon us to take away the thing we most desire, the perpetuation of our race, to punish us for our arrogance in interfering with His will. This child is young and has yet her life to live. She was given into our hands as a sacred heritage by her dead mother. If she has set her heart on marrying this man, and he is proved worthy, what right have we, for the sake of our pride, to force her to do a thing which will break her heart?"

Here was a new note in the family

quarreling. Never before had the peacemaker of the Champneys dared to cross the will of the head of this house. The two elder women, petrified at their brother's audacity, stood spellbound. The girl, seeing an unexpected possibility of salvation, slipped round the table and put her hand in his.

John Champney, turned to stone at the unexpectedness of his brother's outburst, turned on him with a quietness that boded ill for what was to come. "Are you the head of this family, William, or am I?"

"You, John, but I am a priest. In things concerning any question of the body you have the right to dictate to us. By right of my calling I have the right to speak when it is a question of the immortal soul."

"Soul be damned!" cried John Champney. He clenched his great fist, striking it on the table. For two pins he'd have struck the girl. "I'm master of this house and my will is law. I've said my say and I stick to it."

"And I stick to mine," cried Charlotte Champney.

"And I stick to mine," cried Julia.

"And I stick to mine," cried Margaret Dalrymple; and she, too, clenched her small hand and struck it on the table, defying her grandfather to his face.

"And I stick to mine." William Champney was a priest and not a soldier, but no Champney's voice giving orders to his men in the hour of battle ever rang out more dominant and clear. "I've said I will be no party to this quarrel. I warn you if you persist in it God will send no blessing upon us but a curse. I offer myself as a sacrifice to God to avert that calamity falling upon our house." He slipped his hand into his cassock and held up his crucifix in his right hand as if administering an oath. "By this cross I swear I will neither taste food to assuage my hunger nor drink to quench my thirst until this matter be settled to the mutual satisfaction of you all. You may give in, John, and consent to this marriage, or you, my child, may give in and see fit to do what your grandfather desires.

But until one of you gives way to the other I will neither eat nor drink." His face was the face of that William Champney who had defied the great Henry and been burnt at the stake.

For a moment the five Champneys stood round the table staring at him in silence. Then William Champney slipped the crucifix back into his breast and quietly walked out of the room.

IV

As the door closed behind him a little electrical thrill seemed to run through the remaining four, but not one of them tried to stop him. They just stood there and stared at each other as if they had been turned to stone. The quarrel had suddenly developed into a tragedy. In an instant the ordinary conditions of modern life seemed to have been changed and the Middle Ages to have leapt out of their grave again.

To an outsider the scene very possibly would have appeared theatrically flamboyant, even ridiculous. To the Champneys—the children of tradition, brought up in an atmosphere of abnormal emotion—tragedy came as a matter of course.

Charlotte Champney was the first to recover herself. "This is what comes of marrying out of the family." Her blue eyes hardened themselves in her scarlet face until they looked like two bits of blue stone. She glared at Margaret Dalrymple. "It's your father's blood coming out in you at last."

"I'm quite willing to bear my sins on my own shoulders, thank you, Aunt Charlotte," her niece answered her. "You'll be good enough to leave my dead father alone."

"This is what comes of setting up your will against your grandfather's," cried her Aunt Julia. "Now you'll have to give in or your Uncle William will starve."

"Starve!" cried Margaret Dalrymple, but her voice trembled though it was so loud. "Ridiculous nonsense! Uncle William will eat when he's hungry. Don't you worry yourself."

"Eat!" screamed Charlotte Champney, thrusting her face across the table. "Your Uncle William's a priest, and a priest can't break his oath."

"To the devil with your oaths and your quarreling!" roared her grandfather. "I want to be alone. Get out of here and quarrel upstairs."

The words were hardly out of his mouth before the two furious women had reached the door. The girl, tossing her beautiful head, with defiance in every line of her body, stood still for a moment; then she turned and followed her aunts out of the room.

The Head of the Family was alone.

John Champney strode forward and turned the key in the door. He sat down in his great chair at the head of the table, and his ancestors, in their gilded frames, stared down at him, with their hard blue eyes, from the wall.

It was not the first time they had looked down on a family quarrel, nor, until the last Champney had drawn his last breath and gone home to the God that made him, would it be the last. If they could have spoken they could have told of strange scenes that had been enacted before their painted eyes. All the great rows of the Champney family had taken place in the library. It was there that they foregathered to toast the birth of a new Champney. It was there they assembled to sign the marriage deeds of their daughters and sons. It was there that they lay in state, with lighted tapers at head and foot, before they went on their last journey to join the dead in the family vault. If you looked closely you could see the mark of the silver feet of their coffins on the great table, footprints of glory, leading the way to the end of all human glory, the grave.

It was in the library, too, that the living Champneys assembled to quarrel and fight over the possessions of their dead. You could see the deep dent in the oak, which time had polished to a surface like black crystal, where a dead and gone Champney had flung down the golden spoon used at Richard Cromwell's anointing which had fallen to his share. The spoon in its velvet case was locked

away in the safe in the corner with its second pearl still missing. But the dent made by the dead hand of the raging Champney, who had cursed his brother as a traitor to his king, had told its story of violence and fratricide to the sun for over four hundred years. They had fought to the death, those two brothers, who had quarreled over that golden spoon; had stepped out through the French windows and killed each other on the terrace, while the family, blue-eyed and silent, had looked on. The legend ran that the strange red flower, one of Shortlands' glories and unique in horticultural England, had drunk its color from their blood.

Yes, the pictures on the wall of the Shortlands library would have told strange stories if they had come to life. They had seen a father kill his son for treachery and go to his own punishment with a laugh on his mouth. They had seen an outraged husband stand in the shadow of a screen—part spoil of a looting Champney, sewed in Fotheringay Castle by Mary Stuart—and strangle the life out of the beautiful traitress with his own hands. It was whispered in the servants' hall that her spirit could be seen at midnight, a black line around her white neck and the great string of the Champney diamonds clutched in her hands.

Here it was, too, that the Champney who had played away all he possessed had taken his own life. His gay blue eyes and his mocking smile shone out from the wall. He looked down almost within hand reach of the place where spots of his own life blood still stained the Cordovan chair which a Champney, who had sailed the Main with the great Drake, had brought home from Spain. It was in this room that the old man, sitting there with his scarlet face, had turned his best loved daughter out of his heart, and with a merciless hand had thrust her out, bare-necked and satin-footed, into the bitter wind and falling snow, never to return until she came, as all the Champneys returned, not to plead for forgiveness but to demand the payment of their birthright: house room for their bodies when they were dead.

Strange, strange scenes had those blue-eyed Champneys looked down on, but never on a stranger scene than had been enacted that day.

The William Champney who had sworn by the living God that he would ride his horse up the great stairs with his bride on his arm had not been so strange as the William Champney who had kissed the feet of his dying Saviour and sworn to starve to death if need be to bring peace to the last of his house.

The first William Champney had brought his bride home and flung her radiant beauty on the bed where she was to sleep for the first time as a Champney, and ridden his horse down again to drink her health in the hall. On the shining boards there were the marks of the gallant beast, the pride of the younger lovers who told the tale. He had fulfilled his oath.

Would the William Champney, the last of his race to bear that honored name, fulfill his?

For an hour John Champney sat in his chair at the head of the table and held communion with his dead. When he rose from that strange silence his face was as if it had been hewn out of the gray stone with which the first of his kin had built their house.

His face was no longer flushed; his eyes were no longer on fire; his hands no longer trembled. Master of himself, he went to the window and looked on the great garden which it was his boast was the fairest in all the fair country that he loved.

Down the great terrace the peacocks came walking, their gorgeous tails gleaming like jewels in the blazing sun. As far as he could see the velvet lawns sloped away until they reached the famous avenue of trees. He could hear the gay birds calling to one another. He could see the butterflies flitting from flower to flower. He could smell the exquisite breath of the roses languishing under the hot kisses of their lover, the sun.

But John Champney saw nothing but the white face of his brother William. He heard nothing but the voice which had dedicated itself to the service of

God, uplifted, shrill and sweet in the taking of his oath.

John Champney knew his brother William as he knew himself. That he would fulfill his bond even at the cost of his own life, he never questioned. Whatever came of it, William Champney would keep his word. If the girl, like her mother before her, defied him, what was he, John Champney, to do?

Upstairs, in the room above him, stood his granddaughter. She, too, had thrown open her windows. She, too, looked out on that exquisite piece of England which, one day, might belong to a son of hers. She, too, her young heart torn between the two great passions, young love and misery, asked herself incredulously, if her uncle were fanatic enough to stick to his word, what she was going to do.

"Silly old darling!" she said to herself impatiently. "The thing's impossible! Even to stand here and think about it seriously makes me almost as silly as he. Not eat and drink, indeed! Rot!"

She shrugged her shoulders as if she were flinging to the ground a weight that irked them; she came back into her bedroom and stood at the glass smoothing her hair. "Rot," she repeated, nodding at her own beautiful reflection. She put down the comb and thrust her face into the cool water until it was as cold as ice. She was still saying "Rot" when the gong in the hall began to ring out its summons to tea.

Now if there was one thing that William Champney loved it was his afternoon tea. Ascetic by inclination, he was a dainty feeder, as all the peacemakers of the Champney family were. He would content himself with an egg while the other members of the family—whose robust appetites were another Champney tradition—raged their way through nine solid courses and dessert. A plate of jelly, a dainty slice of chicken, a salad and a glass of claret sufficed him always for a meal. But his tea he loved with a passion that a keen psychologist would have recognized as a strange survival of the original Champney, which neither praying nor fasting could totally quell.

It was his niece's delight to ply him with the dainty cakes and sandwiches that constituted his chief meal.

The gong had not finished booming before Margaret Dalrymple was down the stairs and in the hall.

There stood the elegant equipage with her chair in readiness. Beside it was the low armchair in which Richard the Second had sat, guest of the Champney of his time, and on the arm of which with the end of his poignard he had carved his name. The chair belonged to the priests of the Champney family by right divine. William Champney often complained of the crown getting in the way of his head when he sat in it every afternoon and took his tea.

It was drawn up as usual close to the tea maker's place. A little low stool covered with a delicate lace cloth was wedged in between the two. It was a joke between William Champney and his niece Margaret that better cakes than the rest of the family were given should be shared in secret under cover of the silver teapot between the two. The dainty dish of sandwiches was waiting, but no William Champney sat in the empty chair. The other three chairs were also empty, also an unusual thing. At the first sound of the gong the entire household usually came rushing down the stairs to their meals.

Margaret Dalrymple took it in at a glance as she came down the last few steps. The beautiful silver, the priceless china, the cobwebby cloth, the dainty dishes; the powder-headed footman in the Champney scarlet and black behind her chair, the old butler waiting in readiness for the head of the house to appear. But not one single member of the family.

"Rot," said Margaret Dalrymple to herself. "Rot, rot, rot."

She whisked herself furiously across the hall into her own chair.

"Uncle William out, Simmons?" she asked the butler airily as she passed him.

"Mr. William isn't coming in to tea, Miss Margaret." His face was like a mask, but the old man could not keep the trouble out of his voice.

Margaret Dalrymple made the tea.

She opened the silver tea caddy and measured out the tea with the old Dutch spoon. She put in the dainty pinch of Pekoe which the Champney family loved. She filled the teapot from the urn which hissed in front of her and slapped down the lid. Then she sat and waited. Nobody came.

"My aunts can't have heard the gong, Simmons," she said to the butler. "James had better ring again."

"Very good, Miss Margaret." He signed to the footman, who advanced and sounded the gong. It boomed and roared through the house, but no aunts appeared. Instead, a prim-looking maid appeared through the side door with a message that neither of the ladies required any tea.

"Is my grandfather out, too, Simmons?"

"No, Miss Margaret. The master's in the library. He says he won't take any tea."

"Idiots!" said Margaret Dalrymple to herself. "*Idiots!*" She poured herself out a cup of tea, smacked the cream and sugar into it and loaded her plate with cake. "*Idiots!*" she repeated viciously, eating and drinking. The tea was so hot it scalded her, and the rich plum cake full of comfits—another family tradition—stuck in her throat. Suddenly the silence and the empty chairs and the great hall with the motionless servants became unbearable. "The tea's undrinkable, Simmons," she snapped at the butler as she passed him. "The water didn't boil."

The old man looked after her and shook his head sadly as she flounced out of the hall.

V

"Rot, rot, *rot!*" said Margaret, standing at the telephone ringing up her lover. "They've none of them come down to tea and I don't mind betting that they won't come to dinner. Did you ever hear such drivel in your life?"

"Keep your hair on!" her lover's voice came to her over the telephone. "It'll do them good to go without for once. They drink a sight too much tea anyway."

"How do you know what they drink?" she snapped, flaring out at him instantly. Then she sighed prodigiously. "Oh, Reggie! Suppose they don't eat any dinner?"

"Then, my sweet child, they'll eat supper instead."

"You don't know how silly they are."

"I know how silly *you* are. Would you like me to come down?"

"If you did, there'd be murder."

"Well, if you're all going to starve yourselves to death, they might just as well finish me up, too." She could hear his gay laughter ringing out at the other end of the telephone. "Ring up a bit later and tell me what the old donkies have done."

Her nerves a trifle restored by her lover's confidence, the girl snatched a hat from the hall rack and went out. She went past the library windows. The blinds were down and the windows were shut. She went down onto the lower terrace and looked up at the house. All the bedroom blinds were drawn except her own. It was as if there had been a death.

She turned away impatiently and bent her steps to the rose garden where, in a shaded arbor, her Uncle William was accustomed to sit and read after his afternoon tea. The arbor was empty. Its desolation struck panic into the soul of this spoilt child of fortune. She felt her heart burning within her as she had felt it burn when she had gone into the hall and seen his empty chair.

She stood still in the sunshine and her eyes smarted with tears. Then her face went scarlet. "Idiots!" she snapped furiously. "The way we go on we ought to have come out of the ark!"

She retraced her steps, went back into the house and up to her bedroom. On the table stood an enormous box of chocolates tied with blue ribbons. Her lover had brought it to her from Paris the day before. Margaret Dalrymple tore the ribbons off the box, tore her dress off her back, snatched a book from the table, and with the box of chocolates beside her threw herself on the bed.

The chocolates were from Marquis and the book was the last novel by her

favorite author. When the dressing gong boomed for dinner, however, she had neither touched the sweets nor opened the book.

To her delight all the members of her family, including William Champney, sat in the hall. They were dressed as usual. They were talking as usual. They filed into the dining room as usual. Her spirits rose at the sight. "Reggie's right," she told herself gaily. "The minute dinner's over I'll go to bed, and I'll eat every chocolate in that box, if I die for it, before I sleep tonight."

She was halfway through her soup before she realized that she was the only one using her spoon. The plates were filled and the plates were taken away just as they had been put down. Not a drop was touched. The same happened with the fish and the entrée. Margaret Dalrymple, suffocated with fury, bolted her filleted sole and darted a fiery glance at her grandfather. She helped herself twice to curried eggs which she loathed. By the time the sweets were reached, she was almost hysterical. When dessert was put on the table and her plate heaped full of strawberries, she could have screamed. The two elegant women, the two well groomed, immaculate men, the three servants, the seven-course dinner, the conversation as if nothing were happening out of the common, and nobody eating a mouthful! It was like Barmecide's Feast in the Arabian Nights.

"They haven't eaten a single mouthful nor touched a drop to drink," she told Reggie Carew over the telephone half an hour later. "They sat round the table and talked just the same as usual, and the servants waited and the things were brought and they helped themselves, and nobody touched a thing. It's perfectly frightful."

"Idiots," responded her lover. "What did you have?"

"I ate the whole beastly dinner. It nearly choked me. If it hadn't been for sheer pride, I should have fallen on my knees and howled."

"Howl as much as you please," responded the cheerful young gentleman in London, "but kindly remember that the terms of that driveling old uncle of yours

are: he won't give in unless you give me up."

"Uncle William's not a driveling old thing—he's a darling! I adore him! And that isn't the only thing he said. I needn't give you up if grandpapa will give in about my being engaged to you."

"Then he'd better be quick about it. I won't have you worried. If they say much more I'll come and elope with you in the car. If they like to starve to death, let 'em, and a jolly good job, too. They're as mad as hatters, the whole lot of 'em."

Margaret Dalrymple's face went scarlet. "I'll thank you to speak of my people with proper respect."

"Bother your people! I'll speak of 'em as I choose."

"No, you won't."

"Yes, I will."

"Then I'll break off the engagement."

"Break it off then. I don't care."

This was so exactly what she would have said herself under the circumstances that it tickled her sense of humor. The part of her that wasn't Champney laughed. "Is that all you care about it?"

"Never you mind how much I care."

"How much do you?"

"Enough to murder the whole lot of 'em if they interfere between you and me. You can tell 'em so from me."

"You'd better tell them so yourself."

"I intend to."

"Reggie, what do you mean?"

"I'm coming down tomorrow."

"Reggie, you aren't!"

"I am."

"You're not. I forbid it."

"If you talk like that, I'll come tonight."

"Reggie, if you come it'll spoil everything. You don't know what a row there'll be."

"All the better. I simply love rows."

"So do I. But not our kind of rows. You don't know what we Champneys are like."

"I know what my mother was like when she was in one of her rages. She nearly had a fit."

"So does grandpapa. He's perfectly

awful. Reggie, what was your mother like?"

"Like? Speak louder; I can't hear what you say."

"I said, what was your mother like?"

"Oh, tall, thin, dark; small eyes and a hook nose."

"A *what* nose?"

"A hook nose. You know, a thing with a bump in the middle."

"Reggie, she hadn't! Why, you've got blue eyes and a perfectly *lovely* nose."

"It's more than you can say for that Madras beauty of yours that they want you to marry. He's got a nose on him! Talk about bumps in the middle! He's good-looking if you like."

"A Champney can afford to have a nose with a bump in the middle. My cousin's better than good-looking; he's good."

"What there is of him! Five feet nine of goodness isn't much to boast of."

"It's five feet nine more than you've got. My cousin's an excellent man."

"He's an undersized little bounder—you said so yourself."

"I shall say what I please about my own relations. *You'll* be good enough to leave them alone."

At this interesting moment the old butler entered. "The family's ready, Miss Margaret."

She smacked the receiver onto its hook without even wishing her lover good night and flounced into the hall.

VI

It was a family tradition that the youngest member should sing or play the piano while her elders played at cards. Margaret returned to the hall, and for two solid hours sat and discoursed sweet music while her relations played their usual game of bridge.

An outsider looking through the open windows would have exclaimed at the beauty of the scene. The exquisite room, with its crystal chandeliers, its amber satin walls, its French gilt furniture—commandeered by an ancestor in the troublous times of the reign of the second Charles, the gold harp in the

corner that the royal hands of Henrietta Maria had touched, the rococo writing table which had belonged to the ill-fated Marie Antoinette, the bowls of La France roses, the exquisite miniatures of fair dead Champney women smiling down at the lovely girl in her muslin dress with a rose in her bosom and the famous Champney pearls encircling her fair young throat, made a picture that would have rejoiced the soul of an artist.

In the middle of the room at the polished marquetry table which had once belonged to Charles I sat the four Champneys, the last of their race, playing their game of cards.

Through the sobbing and throbbing of her own music, the quarreling of her relatives came to Margaret Dalrymple as it did every night. They were all good at bridge, and played it, as they did everything else, as if their lives depended on winning. When they were alone they played for halfpennies. When they had guests the stakes ran to fabulous sums. Margaret Dalrymple herself had seen her grandfather scrawl his name on his cheque for hundreds of pounds and shove it across the table to a chance visitor without turning a hair, and the next evening had watched him sweep every card off the table onto the floor in his fury with his sister Charlotte, who, so he declared, had lost him a rubber by finessing a ten when she held the queen.

That night, however, though they quarreled, their quarreling seemed to the girl somehow different. An outsider would have held his breath, expecting them to come to blows. Margaret Dalrymple knew better. They were quarreling just to keep up appearances, not because they really cared. Their faces, too, had altered. Snatching stealthy glances at them as they bent to and fro in the light of the great silver candelabra with its wax candles, though their faces were flushed and their blue eyes shone like fire, to the girl's eyes, sharpened by fear, they looked suddenly pinched and wan.

"Poor old darlings, they must be hungry!" The thought struck the girl

to the heart. She longed with a furious longing to rush to them and beg them to make it up, but she'd have perished rather than speak a word. Her talk with her lover had been by no means soothing. Though she didn't realize it, her own face was scarlet and her own blue eyes were on fire. The rage that made her hands tremble and her heart thump was her part of the family inheritance. Though she called her relatives idiots to go without their dinner, she didn't in the least realize that when she waded through the interminable courses, forcing herself to swallow every mouthful deliberately, she was just as much of an idiot as they.

At half past ten, according to custom, the doors opened and the butler, followed by the footman with port wine and glasses, came in. Solemnly the two men spread the lace cloth over its appointed table, placed the silver tray on it and poured out the four glasses of port wine. There was a fifth glass on the tray, literally an empty courtesy, for no female Champney was expected to take alcohol in any form until she was a wife.

That night, however, at the sight of the empty glass a devil seemed suddenly to spring up in Margaret Dalrymple's breast. She stopped playing, went over to the tray, lifted the decanter and filled the empty glass.

"Shall I bring you your glass of port wine, Aunt Charlotte?" she asked airily. "Or aren't you going to drink it tonight?"

If looks could have killed, three Champneys at least would have been murderers! With one accord they turned their blue eyes on this insolent child of a younger generation who dared to defy them. Their faces, scarlet enough already, turned a deep red.

"And why shouldn't we drink port wine tonight, pray?"

"Shall I bring you your glass then, Aunt Charlotte?"

"I'll thank you to leave my glass alone."

"And yours, grandpapa?"

Her grandfather, with a gesture of horrible violence, threw down his cards.

"Mind your own business," he roared. "I'm sick to death of the sight of you. Go to bed."

"I will when I've drunk my wine," the girl answered him pertly. Her blue eyes crossed her grandfather's like swords jumping out of their sheaths. The whole family watched her in hideous silence as she stood there, a picture of elegant audacity, holding her glass to her lips.

Before she could sip it her grandfather had leapt out of his place and struck the glass out of her hand. The glass shattered to pieces, and the rich red wine, catching her breast in its downward passage, lay on her fair neck and on the delicate carpet at her feet like pools of blood.

"I'll have no young girls drinking in my house. You can wait for that till you're married. Then you can do as your husband tells you. Until then you'll obey me." His gigantic stature, flaring eyes, the rage in his voice, his upraised hand, would have terrified a strong man, but not his granddaughter. With her head thrown back, she stood perfectly erect with a smile on her lips, defying him with every drop of blood in her veins. It was exactly like a scene out of the days gone by—the great room, the spilled wine, the broken glass, the scattered cards, the exquisite girl, and the old man towering above her, his face distorted with rage.

"I won't obey you any longer, grandpapa—neither in the preposterous thing you demanded from me today nor in this." Before he realized what she was doing, she had snatched a second glass from the tray and had drained it to the dregs.

For a moment there was silence. The two women got up from the card table. Above their elegant gowns their faces rose, a miracle of pride and rage. This was a new development in the Champney quarrels. What the outcome of it would be no one, not even the two most concerned, could possibly foretell.

Murder might have been added to the list of Champney tragedies that night had not the peacemaker of the family intervened.

William Champney rose from his seat and slipped in between the two. It needed only his cassock and the jeweled cross shifting on his breast to add the last touch of dramatic picturesqueness to the scene. He laid one of his cold, frail hands on his brother's upraised fist; with the other he gently disengaged his niece's clutching fingers from the glass.

"Ring the bell, my child," he said gently. "It is time for prayers."

The Head of the Family, as if under a spell, fell back, and the young girl rang the bell. In another minute the entire household were on their knees confessing themselves miserable sinners and imploring the forgiveness of Almighty God.

Margaret Dalrymple, her soul torn in two with conflicting passions, her cheeks flaming with what had just occurred, listening to her grandfather bellowing his demands for forgiveness of his own trespasses, could have laughed until she screamed.

When the servants had filed out of the room and the great Bible had been put back in its place, her grandfather went to the hall table and lighted the silver candlesticks to guide the women of the family to their beds. When he came to the third candle he deliberately lighted it, put it back on the table and blew it out.

For the first time in her life, Margaret Dalrymple, too proud to relight it, went upstairs in the dark.

She knelt down and leaned out of her window. Such was the magic of the night that it seemed like a loved voice calling to her to come out. From where she knelt she could see the strange red flower lifting its impassioned face to the moon. By that enchanting light the legend of its coloring springing from her ancestor's blood seemed not only possible but true. By craning her neck a little farther she could see the water gleaming in the little lake where the water lilies grew. A soft breeze brought to her acutely attuned ear the bells of the cattle as they grazed nearby in the park, and the passionate song of the nightingales in the great oak trees which had been virgin forests when the first of her race had thrust his sword up to the hilt in the

earth and proclaimed that as long as he or his lived that place was theirs.

He, too, had sworn an oath and kept it.

Margaret shivered in the moonlight. It seemed to her as though a mailed fist had reached across the intervening centuries and laid itself upon her. A queer sensation, as though she were suddenly in the grip of an unseen hand, seized her. The house felt as though it were a prison. Her room, as she drew her head back again, seemed as though on fire. The voice of the cool, fair night and the radiant moon seemed to lay a spell upon her. Before she realized what she was doing, she had opened her door and crept down the oak stairs.

The house lay in silence and total darkness. No gas left burning for the sake of nocturnal wanderers, no electric light to turn night into day at a touch. No modern aids to up-to-date luxury at Shortlands. A torch had been good enough for the first Champney. Wax candles, the nearest modern approach to them, were good enough for the Champneys of today. The great door, two feet thick and clamped with iron, was bolted and locked every night by the butler and the key taken up to the Head of the Family in solemn state when he went to his room. No getting out that way. It occurred to Margaret for the first time that tradition might be an inconvenience in case of a sudden fire.

On the great door, outlined in stained glass, was the Champney coat of arms. The lion rampant, with the mailed fist in his mouth and the gold crown on his head, had been granted to the Champney who refused a dukedom for saving the life of his king. It blazed in the moonlight in its leaded frame like the royal creature it was—king of beasts crowned by a king of men. Its scarlet and gold flared triumphantly in the moonlight. Margaret Dalrymple, casting her eyes downward, found her feet in their white satin slippers and the front of her white gown crimsoned by its shadows as though she were bathed in blood.

The thought of her grandfather and the port wine and his clenched fist upraised as if to strike her brought the

blood back to her cheeks. The quality of her rage insensibly altered; the blood of her people rose fiercely in her, clamoring to her to get out of it, to shake herself free of all conventions and strike out for herself. She could have battered her delicate hands against that forbidding door in her fever to get out of the house.

Being an extremely practical twentieth century young woman, however, she controlled her senseless temper for the moment, and walking into the drawing room, unbolted the shutters, opened the French windows and stepped out.

VII

THE first rush of the cool air on her face went to her head like wine. Something seemed to have been set loose in her. This exultation of the body, this uplifting of the soul, this invisible force driving her on, without rhyme or reason, into the night, was something she had never felt before. The thought of fear never crossed her mind for a moment. Had a prosaic burglar intent on the Champney jewels appeared with his tools in a bag, she would have led him to the great safe in the library and looked on with a savage joy while he made his haul. The thought of her grandfather's rage when she told him it was she who had opened the windows would have gone far to assuage the anguish of her outraged pride when the old man had struck the glass of wine out of her hand. Nothing would have pleased her better than such an adventure. But, alas, with six men servants sleeping on the premises and a safe which only dynamite could blow up, there was small chance of burglars at Shortlands.

As for ghosts, the girl had no more fear of materialized spirits than she had of a man. She would have loved to stand on the terrace and watch the dead and gone centuries come to life. She would have liked to have stood by and watched that duel of her kinsmen to the death; urged them on, applauded them, stimulated them, inspired them, counted the breathless seconds between the

thrusts, staunched their life blood that had stained their satin coats, stepped in between their swords, if need be, had her caprice desired them to desist.

Margaret looked down at the stain on her fair young breast and struck herself with rage. Her hatred for the grandfather, whom she worshiped, was greater, at that moment, than her love.

Alas, there were no more ghosts than burglars abroad that night. Nothing but the radiant moon, the shining stars, the languishing roses and the fair, fair peace of fair England taking her rest.

She ran down the marble steps of the terrace and looked up at the house. All the windows were open—so much confession to the dictates of modern science; all the blinds were down and the heavy silk curtains behind them tight drawn—so much obedience to a rule which had been made when windows were yet a dream lying unrealized in some master brain unknown to the world.

"Rabbit hutch!" she said vindictively, looking at the glorious old mansion. "Fancy being shut up in that prison when one can be out here in this glory, alone and free!"

Free. That was the real secret of that wild intoxication of spirit, comparable only to the madness of a snared animal unexpectedly let out of its trap. Margaret, with that new sense of life rushing through her veins like leaping fire, told herself that before that night she had never known what it was to live.

She ran down to the lower terrace and looked up at the white statues bathed in the amber light. Strange thoughts of the old days when these beings had walked the earth as gods came to her. She bent her knee to Venus, goddess of beauty and love, and snatching at some roses growing opposite the statue, strewed them at her feet. She flung her arms round the feet of Apollo and laid her flaming cheek against the marble limbs of the smiling god. She ran to the lake and, throwing off her satin shoes, plunged her white feet into its golden depths. On an impulse she could not herself have defined, she tore the hairpins out of her head and let down her hair. She snatched a handful of lilies and wove them into a

chaplet and put them on her head. As she sat there, the pure joy of life overflowing out of her lips in song, with her crown of lilies, her golden hair, and the pearls hanging in shining lustrous rows almost to her slender waist, she might have been the mermaid out of Hans Andersen's fairy story come to life.

She dried her feet on the soft green grass, she sang, she danced, she ran over the velvet lawns, barefooted, clapping her hands like a little child. When, in an overlooked corner, she came on a ring of toadstools, recalling the legends of her childhood, she held out her hands on either side of her for invisible hands to clasp and danced madly round them as if she were the only visible member of the spirits making the magic circle complete.

As she did so, her eyes, sparkling with joy, caught sight of a shadow lying slantwise on the grass in the form of a cross. So perfect was its outline that she stopped dancing, her curiosity was so sharply aroused. So mystic it was as it lay there, outlined in darkness, that it fell on her like a spell. She looked round, turning her head first this way and then that, endeavoring to find out what caused it. Then the light came into her eyes again. There was nothing supernatural about it. It was simply the shadow of the cross from the little church.

At the sight of it Margaret stopped her mad dancing, and with swift feet ran in the direction of the last resting place of her family dead. Not that she wanted either death or religion to cross her path that night—her mood was too frankly pagan for that—but the instant that shadow had come to her view, with it came the thought of the ghostly priest who wandered to and fro crying out for the son he had killed.

Even since a child Margaret Dalrymple had heard that story of dread and woe. She remembered herself with her little fat hand clutching her nurse's gown, hiding her face in its folds, whenever they passed the church. Sunday had been an agony to her for that reason. The memory of one evening when she had disgraced herself by screaming in the

middle of the sermon, because her overwrought nerves had mistaken the old verger in the shadow on the archway for the ancestral ghost, brought a smile to her lips. How she had hated that priest, how she had feared him. And now here she was running as fast as she could in the frantic hope that she might see him for herself. The whispering of the nursery days brought back to her that he stood in the moonlight with bent head wringing his hands and telling his beads, then opened the little gate and vanished into the church.

It seemed to Margaret that she did not run that night but floated over the earth. The sensation was like flying in a dream. Her feet scarcely touched the earth. She had no active sensation of moving, yet she was moving faster than she had ever moved before. As she took her way, the scent of the newmown hay came to her mingled with the perfume of the fragrant flowers and trees. The night wind seemed to rush beside her; she could feel the magic of its breath in her floating hair. The sweet, dim bells of the cattle sounded to her enthralled ears like supernatural music which enticed mortals over the border into fairyland. The winged moths whirling round her head, the birds clamoring their madness in the night, the stars and the moon and the ecstasy of her own swift flight, made her drunk with the joy of life.

Another rush down the velvet slope and she stopped in full view of the church. There, entrenched in holy ground, lay the dead of her race. Her heart went out to them with a passion of sorrow that they should be dead while she was alive. If there were an after-life, why did not they break out of their house of stone and come out into the night? The thought of that uprising filled her with no sense of fear but rather of grandeur that she should be one of them. The picture in the library of that ancestor's funeral when they had mustered over two thousand strong, came to her with a madness of pride. How she would love to see them, spirits or no spirits, ghosts or no ghosts, just see them, a great procession winding its way before her enchanted eyes!

How strange it would be—gigantic of stature, in chained armor and plumed helmets jostling and clanking out of the church!

She wondered even at that moment of magic if their ghosts would quarrel and fight to the death. And all the fair women of her family in their pride, and the traitress with her string of diamonds, and the brothers in their satin coats with the life blood staining their lace shirts, and the priest—the priest who stood in the moonlight with bent head, wringing his hands . . .

A curious feeling, as of some other presence besides her own, came to her. She turned her head, and there in the moonlight, wringing his hands, stood the priest.

Margaret felt her breath go from her as if she were dying. She was not afraid. She had no desire to cry out or scream. She had no impulse to run away or hide her eyes. She wished for no human presence to be near to hold her hand. It was rather an extraordinary sensation that the thing which she had heard and scoffed at was true. Never again would she laugh at ghosts; never again could she disbelieve anything that anyone said. Never again could she doubt that there was another world, never again deny the resurrection from the dead.

She stood and looked at the figure as it advanced toward her down the slanting pathway, the white pebbles glistening like silver in the light of the moon.

The priest was tall. His black silk cassock dragged on the ground. She could hear the silk rustling and the stones moving under the fall of his feet. His soft hat was pulled over his face so that it lay in shadow. She could not see what he was like. In his hands he held a rosary of white beads. At the end swung a little jeweled crucifix. She caught the light sparkling on the diamond until it turned the crown of the dying Christ to sparks of living fire.

She stood still and waited for his coming. As he drew nearer it seemed to her that the night wind brought to her ears the sound of his murmuring.

Nearer and nearer he came, and she, her heart barely beating, her breath

coming in soft gasps, waited for him with outstretched hands and eyes that held in them all her life.

Nearer he came and nearer, until he was within reach of her outstretched hands. In her subconscious self she had resolved to put her hand out and touch him. Her whole being was in an agony to feel the impalpable clutch of her own flesh on that ghostly robe of silk. It was in her mind to fall on her knees and ask his ghostly blessing. It had been her sacrilegious hope to fling herself in his way and snatch the rosary from his hand.

But of all these things she did none.

She was a Champney, and no fear withheld her from doing what she wished, but he was a Champney, too, and the majesty of his sorrow impressed her with awe.

He passed her by, and she neither touched him nor spoke. She just stood still, watching him with an alert eye.

Slowly, slowly, he drew away from her in the distance. Still she did not move. She could hear the dragging of his silk cassock growing fainter and fainter. As inch by inch the space between them widened, fainter and fainter became the crushing of the white pebbles under his feet. The muttering of his prayers grew fainter and fainter until it ceased. The tall figure passed out of her sight. She bent her head and listened. She heard the clicking of the latch of the lych gate.

Then and then only she moved. Keeping on the turf edging of the path, she crept softly, silently, until she came to the church.

As she did so, the figure vanished inside and she heard the door open and shut. An obsession of curiosity seized her. She could no more have resisted its importunity than she could have stood still to be burnt alive while there was a chance of escape. She ran forward, opened the lych gate, darted up the path and found herself, panting for breath, with her hand on the church door.

The thought of what she was about to behold checked her for an instant. Would the sacred place be empty save

for that poor soul whose sin drove him back to earth? Would it be filled with a ghostly congregation, spirits of those men and women whose dust lay hidden in the stone houses of the dead? Or, strangest of all, would she find herself in the church alone? Even so, she had seen him. Nothing could alter that. No scoffing at up-to-date science, no theory of optical delusion, no practical explanation that she had been asleep and dreamed it would ever shake her knowledge that she had seen the priest.

Gently she lifted the latch of the church door and went in. The church, pure Norman in architecture, lay almost in darkness. The shadows caused by the heavy columns and the narrow slits which served for windows excluded all the light. Only the altar was visible. The moonlight streamed through the stained windows above it, filling the whole of the chancel with a mystic glow. The golden oblation plate gleamed and glittered as if it were day. In the golden vases madonna lilies raised their passionate faces on either side of the golden cross.

It came to her with a shock that the tapers were all alight. In the center of the altar steps knelt a strange black figure, the folds of his silken cassock sweeping behind him, his bent face hidden in his hands.

Margaret's heart leaped within her. If her soul's eternal salvation had depended upon her standing still, she would still have gone forward. The whole of her mental life was in abeyance merged in the mad desire to hold communion with this materialized spirit who came from another world to try and make his peace with God by prayer.

Hardly conscious of what she was doing, she crept forward. Her bare feet made no sound as she stole noiselessly from pew to pew. She had reached the chancel steps when suddenly she stopped rooted to the spot.

The figure at the altar was moving. It raised its hands with emotion; it lifted its face; it began to speak. Each word came to the agonized ears of the girl sweet and clear.

"Behold, O God, I have sworn an

oath. I am an old man, faint of spirit and stricken in years. Without Thy help I shall surely fail. Accept my body as a sacrifice, O God. No bread shall pass my lips nor will I assuage my thirst with water until all is well between them. Behold, I lay my body on Thine altar. Do what Thou wilt. Strengthen me that I may show no sign of weakness. Give me a sign, O God, that my sacrifice is acceptable to Thee and that Thou wilt restore peace between those I love."

The voice died away and once again there was silence. But Margaret did not move. She felt as if her feet were glued to the spot. That strange voice full of mystic exultation had but heightened her excitement. So great was her nervous tension that she seemed incapable of any sensation. It was as though her body were dead and her living soul were held in suspended animation waiting for what was to come next.

That agony of suspense was not to last long.

Barely had the echo of that strange prayer died away among the dim arches when the dark figure prostrated before the altar rose and turned its face to the church door.

Margaret Dalrymple reeled back as though an invisible hand had struck her. It was no ghost, but her Uncle William Champney, who stood upon the altar steps.

The reaction was so great that she felt a sudden cessation of life within her. She wanted to fling herself at her uncle's feet and call him by his name. She found herself incapable of making either movement or sound. She could not have moved a finger if it had been to save her life. She stood there staring at him as if she were turned to stone.

This girl, who feared neither man nor devil, was suddenly filled with terror at the sight of this old man who had stolen from his bed at midnight to lay the sacrifice of his body and his petition for her happiness at the feet of God. What would he say when he saw her? What would he think, when he knew that she had wantonly thrust herself into the sanctuary of his soul and intervened between his spirit and his God?

Escape was impossible; explanation would be a mockery; apology would be the most unforgivable sin of all. She loved him too tenderly not to realize what his agony of outraged pride would be.

There was only one thing left to do—to face it. All said and done, she was a Champney, too. The situation, which would have been alike impossible and incomprehensible to an outsider, seemed to her quite natural. She went forward to meet him as he came down the church aisle.

Even as she stepped forward, he turned and saw her.

"Margaret!" he cried.

The agony in that one word was unbearable. Speech was impossible. The girl stepped forward out of the shadows and silently held out her hands.

But William Champney did not answer. He, too, stretched out his hands in silence and fell on his knees.

So they stood there a moment and looked at each other and neither of them spoke a word.

It was a strange scene. The ancient church, the kneeling priest, his ascetic face and frail clasped hands thrown up against the golden altar with its lilies and its lighted candles, and the beautiful girl with her bare feet and her white dress and her golden hair standing in the moonlight with outstretched hands. She might well have sat for the divine Beatrice who leaned on the bars of heaven and looked down with pitying eyes on the distant earth.

"Margaret!" said William Champney. "Saint Margaret! You have been sent from heaven to tell me all will be well." The ecstasy of the seer of visions illumined his uplifted countenance. He hid his face in his hands.

In an instant Margaret—quick-witted Champney—realized what had happened. Her uncle had taken her for a vision vouchsafed from heaven, even as she, in her mad mood for ghost seeing, had mistaken him.

To stay and face it out was no longer possible. Seizing the happy moment, she slipped noiselessly down the aisle out of the church into the moonlight and

fled, no longer the joyous pagan but sobbing with excitement and apprehension, through the gardens back into the house and into her bed.

VIII

NEXT morning, when she woke, Margaret could hardly realize that the events of the night before had been anything but a dream. It was not until she saw the torn and stained chiffon gown lying on the floor that she understood what had occurred.

As she bundled the telltale gown into a drawer and locked it, she asked herself what she was going to do: give up her lover, give in to her grandfather, or let her uncle starve?

The mere thought of William Champney turned his niece's heart to tears.

Angrily she choked her sobs back, threw open her windows and looked out.

It was a glorious morning. The sun was bright; the trees were swaying in the delicious breeze. The flowers, the dew still on them, shone like jewels against the enchanting green. The peacocks, stately and gorgeous, were waiting on the terrace to be fed. The doves with their ruffled necks and their pink feet were circling and cooing and strutting on the lawn. The bees and the butterflies were flitting and humming among the roses. The birds in the wood were frantic with joy.

Something in that morning glory got into Margaret Dalrymple's blood as she skipped out of her cold bath and got into her spotless dress. She flung herself on her knees and her heart went up to the God that had created all these lovely things in a passion of thanksgiving and entreaty. Surely happiness would be forthcoming from the great Being who had made the earth so happy and so fair.

When she got down the family was already at breakfast. The table was spread with its usual load of English dainties. The men servants were in attendance as usual, handing the dishes and changing the plates. At the head of the table sat Charlotte Champney.

Her handsome face was flushed and her eyes were like blue stones. She was eating bacon and eggs. Beside her sat John Champney. His face was crimson and his eyes like blue steel. With a vigor that struck his granddaughter as almost ostentatious, he was swallowing mutton chops. On his left sat his sister Julia. Elegant and pensive, with red spots on her white face and her eyes inflamed with crying, she was eating toast and strawberry jam.

As she entered the room her three relatives lifted their heads and looked at her. She returned their glaring with interest. The sight of their heaped-up plates and munching jaws was like wine to her. It was only when her eyes fell on the empty chair beside her own that her heart fell.

"You're late," said Aunt Charlotte sharply.

"I'm sorry," returned her niece.

"If I can be down by eight, so can you," snapped her grandfather.

She came forward and sat down. It was the first time in her life that she had eaten her breakfast without a kiss which was like a benediction and a benediction which was more tender than a kiss.

Still they were eating their breakfast! Her spirits rose at the sight. It was only when she was well through her first helping of pigeon pie and passing her plate for more that it occurred to her to ask where her Uncle William was.

"Where's Uncle William?" she inquired airily.

The three elder Champneys stopped eating and looked at her. Their eyes made her blood run cold.

"Uncle William's not coming down this morning," said Charlotte coldly.

There was a pause.

"Having breakfast in bed?" asked Margaret, greatly venturing.

There was another pause.

"Having no breakfast at all," said her grandfather. He nodded ferociously to the footman at the side of him. "Give me another chop."

Margaret laid down her knife and fork with a sudden feeling of nausea. Seeing them all happily eating, she had imagined in some incomprehensible way

that the quarrel was over. The mere thought of her uncle fasting while she was feasting caused the sight of food to turn her physically sick. She looked at her three elders still steadily gorging and recalled their fasting of the previous night. If then, why not now? She longed to get out of her chair and demand an explanation, but the sight of her grandfather's face was too much for her. She literally didn't dare. It was only when the Head of the Family, followed by his sister Charlotte, tramped silently out of the room, that she put out her hand and detained her Aunt Julia, who was following in their wake.

"Have they made it up?" she whispered eagerly.

"Made it up!" Aunt Julia raised her eyes to heaven at the mere possibility of such an idea.

"Then why did you eat your breakfast this morning, when you refused to eat your dinner last night?"

"Your grandfather told us we were to. He said if we didn't eat we should have to leave the house."

"I suppose he was afraid of what the servants would say."

"Afraid! Your grandfather! *Of the servants!*" The amazed contempt in the well bred voice cut the girl like a knife.

"Then why did he change his mind?"

"He said it wasn't fair to your Uncle William. It might make him look absurd." The gong boomed loudly in the hall. "Come along; it's time for prayers."

"I'm not coming."

"Not coming to prayers? You must."

"I won't."

"Your grandfather will be furious."

"Let him be furious! I don't care."

"Margaret, there'll be a horrible row."

"All the better. The bigger the row, the better I'll be pleased."

Julia Champney clutched at her niece's hand. "If it comes to the worst, I'll stand by you."

"I don't want anyone to stand by me, Aunt Julia. You go to prayers." She pulled herself away from her aunt and went and stood by the window looking out.

All so fair, so full of joy and peace. For the first time in her life she thought of the hidden terror of that fair garden. The sweet birds destroying the happy insects, the sharp-eyed ferrets in the wood destroying the sweet birds. The whole of the exquisite scene hiding an active animosity, a deadly racial hatred; an activity which seemed but created to serve for the destruction of life. How like themselves! The fair room, the fair clothes, the fair, sunny side of life; and beneath it rage, hatred and tyranny of soul against soul! The whole of the world's pain and sorrow seemed to open before the girl's beautiful young eyes. The door banged open and her grandfather came in.

"Didn't you hear the gong?"

She turned and faced him. "Of course I heard it, grandpapa; I'm not deaf."

"Then why didn't you come to prayers?"

"Because I'm not coming."

"As long as I'm master of this house, every member of it attends prayers. I'm not going to make an exception for you."

"You'll have to, grandpapa. I won't come."

"You refuse to worship Almighty God?"

"I refuse to blaspheme Almighty God."

"What the devil do you mean?"

"I call it blasphemy to kneel down and pray when we're doing everything that the Bible tells us not to."

"Then do what the Bible tells you to: 'Obey your father and mother that your days may be long in the land.'"

"You're neither my father nor my mother, grandpapa," the girl flashed out at him. "You refused to receive my father, and you turned my mother out."

"And I'll turn you out, too, by God, if you don't take care!"

"Turn me out then and have done with it. But I won't go to prayers." Scarlet-faced, with flaming eyes, they stood and glared at each other, the young girl and the old man, so like in their rage and their pride that the age seemed to

fall from the one and the other seemed to get suddenly old.

At that moment the peacemaker of the family quietly entered the room. He stood between the two of them and laid a hand on the shoulder of each. "Dear brother," he said gently, "dear child, we are waiting for you." Standing between them, he slipped his hand through his brother's arm, and leaning on his niece's shoulder, he gently drew them out of the room.

On her knees, the prayers falling unheeded on her ears, Margaret Dalrymple watched her uncle. Something of the glory of the night before still lingered, enhancing the charm of his ascetic face. All the rage, all the misery died out of her heart as she watched him and thought how he had fallen on his knees before her, taking her to be a vision sent by heaven to his aid. Strangely enough, the thought of his physical suffering never entered her head. By the light of that midnight uplifting he seemed to have become a thing apart from his kind, less like a man than a saint.

"He hasn't eaten anything since yesterday morning," she said to her lover over the telephone a few minutes later. "He'll be ill if he goes on like this."

"Then why on earth doesn't he stop it? What rot it all is! What are you sniffing for?"

"I'm not sniffing."

"You are—I heard you. What's the matter? Got a cold?"

"Of course I haven't a cold."

"Then what are you sniffing for?"

"I tell you, I'm not sniffing."

"I tell you, I heard you." His voice changed suddenly. "You're not crying, are you?"

"Of course I'm not crying." Her voice changed as subtly as his. "Oh, Reggie, if he doesn't eat lunch, what am I to do?"

"Wait till he eats dinner, of course."

"I shouldn't mind if it were grandpapa, but Uncle William! Oh, Reggie, you don't know what a darling he is. Hush; grandpapa's coming. Ring off."

"Right. Ring up after lunch."

IX

MARGARET hung up the receiver and went to her room. Too proud to seek her aunts' society, too miserable to seek for outside distractions, too tired to write or work, she lay on her bed watching the hours drag by. At midday, unable to bear the solitude any longer, she rang and asked for her Uncle William. The servant told her he had gone out after breakfast and had not returned.

She snatched a parasol and went into the garden. It was then about half past twelve. The Champneys lunched at one.

She found her uncle in the little arbor reading his breviary. He looked up as she came in and smiled. So sweet was his smile, so placid his face, that it was hard to believe that anything unusual had occurred. The girl slipped through the doorway, and dragging up a stool which had been her private property since she was a little girl, sat down at her accustomed place at his feet and laid her hand against his knee. For a long time they sat, the silence broken only by the turning of the pages of his book and the chattering of the birds. Then very quietly he laid his hand upon her head.

At the touch of that dear hand, so frail, so kind, the girl broke into passionate tears.

"Uncle William," she sobbed, "I'd give up Reggie if it were only a question of myself; but I've got to think of him."

"Of course you've got to think of him, my dear."

"I wouldn't do it for grandpapa, but I'd do it for you."

"You'd do it for your grandfather, too, Margaret."

"No, I wouldn't. I hate him. He's not been fair to me."

"Have you been fair to him, my child?"

"I don't see that I've done anything that isn't fair. I didn't make any secret of it. It isn't as though I'd gone behind your backs, as though it were something I was ashamed of. I told you the minute I got engaged."

"Twelve hours after you met him for the first time, Margaret."

The girl's face flushed scarlet. "It didn't take me twelve minutes before I knew he was the only man in the world for me. It's not my fault I'm a Champney, Uncle William. That's how love takes us."

William Champney was silent. He looked at her very tenderly. Even so had love taken him.

"Love is the best gift of God, my child. Don't spoil it."

"How can one spoil love?"

"By forgetting its holiness. Don't cheapen your love by quarrels, Margaret."

"Reggie and I quarrel like cat and dog, Uncle William, but we love each other all the same."

"That's how it is with you and your grandfather. You quarrel but you love each other. You love him and he loves you."

"I do love him, Uncle William. I adore grandpapa. I love them all, but not as I love you." She snatched his hand and laid it against her soft flushed cheek. "There's nobody on earth, not even Reggie, I love quite as I love you."

William Champney was terribly moved. Once, in that very arbor, that other Margaret had chanced upon him one summer morning, had burst in on his reading, snatched his hand and held it to her face and laid bare her heart to him in almost the same words.

"My darling," he murmured.

"Oh, Uncle William," said the girl, clinging to him, "don't go on with it. I can't bear it. It's so mad, so stupid. Do be a darling and give it up, just to please me."

Even so had *she* stormed at him; even so had she looked at him out of her beautiful, miserable eyes; even so had she flung her passionate young arms round his neck. He had hardened his heart to the woman he loved on that June morning; now he hardened his heart to her grandchild. He gently disengaged himself from her arms. "Would you have a man break his oath, Margaret?"

"Men break their oaths every day, Uncle William."

"I'm not a man, Margaret; I'm a priest."

Stunned, the girl looked at him. Everything seemed to go black before her eyes. "But, Uncle William," she stammered, "if I don't give in, and grandpapa doesn't give in, what's going to happen?"

William Champney smiled tenderly at her. "God knows, my child!"

He turned from her and stood in the doorway, looking across the peaceful gardens to the great trees bowing and swaying in the wind, full of happy, chattering birds. The rapt look on his face made Margaret's heart stand still. It was as though an invisible hand had stretched itself forth from the unseen and was snatching him away from her before her very eyes. She stood with her eyes glued to his white face, her heart beating to suffocation until the great gong, booming and echoing out on the terrace, brought him back to earth.

"Is that the gong already?" he said. "Come, my dear; we must hurry or you'll be late for lunch." He slipped his hand through her arm. It seemed to the girl that he leaned more heavily upon it than usual. Together they went back to the house.

In the great dining room the three Champneys were already seated eating their lunch. They ate in a kind of savage silence, as though they were cutting themselves with their knives instead of their food. The smell of the hot roast mutton and the mint in the green peas turned Margaret sick. For a moment it seemed to her as though she couldn't go through with it, and then a glance at her grandfather's scarlet face brought the color to her own. Her pride and her temper rose together in a kind of whirlwind of passion. She sat down and attacked her mutton with a fury that rivaled his.

The coming of the pudding, however, proved her undoing. It was William Champney's favorite pudding, a thing made with eggs and cream and decorated with glacé cherries, a simple confection that he loved.

Margaret helped herself to a valiant portion, and heaping her spoon, raised

it to her lips. To her dismay, she found it was a sheer physical impossibility to take it into her mouth. She cast one glance at her uncle, flung down her spoon and rose to her feet.

"Will you excuse me, please?"

Her grandfather looked at her as he had looked at her earlier that morning. "What's the matter with you?"

"Nothing's the matter with me, grandpapa."

"Are you ill?"

"No, I'm not."

"Then sit down and eat your food."

"I don't want any more food. I've had enough."

"Then what did you take that pudding for?"

"Because I thought I wanted it. Now I don't."

"You've taken it; eat it."

Instantly the other two Champney women put their spoons down on their plates.

"Why should she eat it if she doesn't want it?" demanded Julia Champney.

"Quite right, too, John. It's a preposterous waste of food," screamed his sister Charlotte.

John Champney banged his great fist on the table until all the glasses jumped. "Mind your own business," he roared to his sisters. "As for you"—he thumped his fist again—"you sit down and eat your pudding as I tell you."

The girl's face went scarlet. She snatched up her plate with the pudding still on it and flung it onto the floor. "Make your dogs eat it, grandpapa; you can't make me."

John Champney rose slowly out of his chair, towering, terrible. He pointed to the door. "Get out! I hate the sight of you."

"Not as much as I hate the sight of you."

Scarlet-faced, with flaming eyes, they glared at each other. Then, head erect, insolent audacity crying out of every line of her, the last of the Champneys took herself out of the room.

Once outside the door, she flew to the telephone.

"Uncle William's eaten nothing. There's been a fearful row."

"Good business. Who?"

"Grandpapa and me."

"What happened?"

"He told me to eat my pudding."

"What did you do?"

"I threw it onto the floor."

"How dared you do such a thing?"

Distinct and stern her lover's voice came over the telephone. It was not a question; it was a demand. The girl was so taken aback that for once in her life she had no answer ready. "What right had you to speak to your grandfather like that?"

"What right had my grandfather to speak like that to me?"

"He's the head of the house. He's a right to speak as he chooses."

"Mind your own business. He's my grandfather, not yours."

"I don't care whose grandfather he is. You'd no right to treat him like that."

"So you're siding against me, are you? One would think you were a Champney, too."

"I don't care who I am. I'd have killed you if you'd done it to me."

"I shouldn't care if you did. I'm so miserable I wish I were dead."

"Margaret"—his voice changed as it had changed before. "Darling! How can you be miserable when you're engaged to me?"

"What's the good of being engaged if we can't be married?"

"Who says we can't be married?"

"How can we? You don't suppose I can let that poor darling starve!"

"Oh, don't talk such silly rot. If he finds your Uncle William means it, your grandfather'll give in."

"Grandpapa give in! I'd like to see the man who could make him!"

"You'll see him right enough."

"Who?"

"Me."

"You! If he saw you now he'd flay you alive."

"Good business. Tell him I'm coming down to be flayed."

"Reggie, you aren't. I forbid it."

"I'm coming all the same."

"No, you're not. I'm coming up."

While her relatives were still clatter-

ing their spoons in their pudding, she was out of the house on her way to town.

X

ON her return, four hours later, without even waiting to take off her things, she marched straight into the library.

Her grandfather sat at the table writing. Her Aunt Charlotte was sorting her embroidery silks in the window. Her Aunt Julia, at her own little table in the other corner, was shuffling her Patience cards. Her Uncle William's chair was empty. For the first time in her life she was glad he wasn't there.

As she entered they all looked up at her. None of them spoke a word.

The girl advanced to the table with perfect composure and laid down her parasol.

"I've been to town," she remarked casually.

Her relatives continued to regard her in stony silence. It was one of the family's best traditions that when there was a real row they never wasted words.

"I've seen Reggie."

Still they said nothing, but her Aunt Charlotte stopped sorting her silks and her Aunt Julia stopped shuffling her cards.

The girl advanced a step nearer. "I went to Reggie's rooms."

Without a sound the three of them rose to their feet.

Margaret took no notice of her aunts. She was conscious only of one thing—the terror of her grandfather's eyes. He stood glaring at her, his great head sunk between his shoulders, his face thrust down to the level of hers.

"Who went to town with you?"

"Nobody."

"You went to see this man alone?"

"Yes."

"Where did you see him?"

"I went to where he lives."

A wave of crimson surged into his face. He came a step nearer. "You went to this man's rooms?"

"Yes."

"You went into the house?"

"Yes."

That was true Champney. She had stood inside the hall with the door open and the man servant in attendance until her lover came down. Their conversation had taken place on the pavement. That, however, was her business, not theirs. She made her bald statement, without explanation or excuse, with an assurance that was simply sublime.

"How long were you with him?"

"Nearly an hour."

"And you dare to come back to this house after you've disgraced yourself?"

"I've not disgraced myself, grandpapa. I've done nothing I'm ashamed of."

"Do you call it nothing for a young girl to go to her lover's rooms *alone*?"

"A Champney can go anywhere."

"With a member of her own family, perhaps. Not with a young blackguard out of the gutter who enticed you to do wrong."

"That's not true, grandpapa. Reggie's never enticed me to do anything."

"I'll discuss that with him, not with you. Get out of my way." He strode to the bell rope and tore at it like a madman.

She flung herself between him and the door. "There's no need for you to go to town, grandpapa. Reggie's coming here to see you."

"If he dares to come here I'll break every bone in his body."

If she'd died for it she couldn't have helped herself. She flung back her head and laughed in his face. "You'll have your work cut out!"

"God! Do you dare to laugh at me?" He lifted his clenched fist and struck her.

So terrific was the force of the blow that she reeled. Every drop of blood in her body seemed to rush into her face.

"That's finished it!" she cried, shaking with fury. "Now I'll never give in, *never*! I swear it! You can do as you choose—give in or let Uncle William starve." She took up her parasol, and with her head up she went slowly out of the room.

What happened after she left the library she never heard. The Champneys never "talked things over" like other people. They were so used to quarreling that they accepted periodical

rows as a matter of course. When her Aunt Julia came to her room an hour later she did not refer either by look or word to what had happened.

She was dressed with her usual elegance in gray silk. The family opals flashed on her thin neck and in her exquisitely dressed gray hair.

She glanced with sullen approval at the slender figure in the delicate muslin gown. "Are you coming down to dinner?"

"Why shouldn't I come down to dinner, Aunt Julia?"

"I suppose it's not a crime to ask a simple question?"

"That depends on how the question's asked."

"I ask questions as I see fit, Margaret."

"And I answer them as I see fit, Aunt Julia!"

Outside the setting sun was turning the sky to gold. The rapture of a black-bird bidding his mate good night burst in on them through the open windows. The cooing of the doves came softly from the adjacent woods. But the two of them saw and heard nothing but their own flushed faces and sharp words.

They were still merrily wrangling when Charlotte Champney came into the room. Hers was the perfect type of the Champney woman. Her black velvet gown lay to her thin figure as though she had been poured into it. It was cut with an audacity and a certainty that proclaimed the sure hand of a great artist. The lace on the bodice, yellow with age, would have fetched a fabulous price. On her bosom and her bare arms she wore the great uncut emeralds, spoils snatched by a crusading Champney from the unregenerate Turk. Their glorious color, thrown up by their diamond setting, added just the right touch of barbaric splendor to the magnificent gown. On a lesser woman such splendor would have appeared unsuitable; on Charlotte Champney it was fitness itself. The Champneys dressed for the pleasure of dressing, not for the edification of outsiders. Nothing they had was too good for themselves.

She slammed the door behind her and

came into the room. Her cold eyes sparkled with an unholy joy. On her cheeks were two bright spots of brilliant red. Evidently the battle had raged loud and long. She did not refer to it, however, any more than her sister, by look or by word. In her turn she glanced with sullen approval at the slender figure in the delicate muslin gown.

"Are you coming down to dinner?"

Her niece whipped round as if she had been pinched. "Is there any reason why I should *not* come down to dinner, Aunt Charlotte?"

Charlotte Champney's blue eyes fixed themselves on the girl's bare shoulders. The delicate flesh where her grandfather had struck her had already turned black. "You'd better put on a lace scarf."

"Why should I put on a scarf, Aunt Charlotte? It's Friday, isn't it?"

"I didn't say it wasn't, did I?"

"Then Uncle William won't be there, in any case."

"Did I say he would?"

"Then I shan't put on a scarf."

The gong began its roaring. Its fury reminded her of her grandfather's face. She followed her aunts down the great staircase into the hall.

Her grandfather was already in the dining room, seated at the head of the great table in his high-backed chair. His face was livid. His bloodshot eyes glittered as if they were made of fire. They fastened themselves on her mercilessly as she advanced toward her seat. Though the marks of his own hand confronted him, neither pity nor remorse softened their furious glare.

"Have you come here to apologize?"

His voice had that curious huskiness that it always had when he came in after a long day's hunt.

"No, I haven't."

"You don't sit at my table till you do." He pointed to the door, his hand shaking with passion. "Get out." He turned to the butler behind him. "Simmons, take away Miss Margaret's chair." The old man lifted the heavy chair. A footman ran forward and removed the silver and glasses. Her two aunts sailed into their places. Before she had got out of the room the soup was being served.

She ran to the telephone and told her lover what had happened. "I'll never forgive him! He said I'd *disgraced* myself!"

"What disgrace is there, pray, in coming to see *me*?"

"That's what I said. He said it'd be different if you'd been a member of the family."

She could hear him chuckling at the other end of the line. "You're quite as safe with me. What else?"

"He asked me if I went into the house."

"As though I'd have let you! What did you say?"

"What do you think? I said 'Yes,' of course."

"Good girl! What business was it of his? Infernal interfering, I call it. What else?"

"He struck me."

"Good God! He *didn't*!"

"He did. My shoulder's all black and blue."

"If he touches you again I'll break every bone in his body. I don't care if he's as old as Methuselah. I'm not going to wait till tomorrow. I'm coming down tonight."

"Not tonight, Reggie; it's Friday."

"What's the matter with Friday?"

"Uncle William's at church."

"What did *he* say about it?"

"He doesn't know yet. Oh, Reggie, I shouldn't mind if it weren't for him! It's twenty-four hours since he had *anything*. What on earth shall I do?"

"You'll have to forcibly feed him. If *they* can stick it out twenty-nine days, so can *he*."

"You wouldn't talk like that if you knew Uncle William. Besides, the poor darling's old."

"Not much older than Mother Panky. Look what she's stood! It didn't hurt *her*."

"*Didn't it!* It nearly killed her. Besides, she drank water. Uncle William won't."

"Keep your hair on. It won't kill him to hold out another twelve hours. I'll be down first thing in the morning. I'll bring the license with me. Have a

bag ready. If they won't listen to reason, you can come up with me."

"Right."

"Good night, darling. What are you going to do now?"

"I'm going to bed. Good night."

Once upstairs in her own room, however, Margaret found she hadn't the slightest inclination to go to bed. Sleep was out of the question. Even to lie down and rest was an impossibility; her nerves were all on edge. The pain in her shoulder, too, was considerable. It burned and throbbed, keeping pace with the rage that burned and throbbed in her heart. She lighted the wax candles on her dressing table and looked at herself in the glass. The look on her own face appalled her. Her eyes were black with pain and hate.

"We're nothing but savages, we Champneys!" she said to herself, shuddering. "Not civilized men and women but raging beasts." She blew out the lights and paced to and fro in the darkness. She was so beset with restlessness that she couldn't sit down.

XI

At a quarter to eleven the gong rang for prayers. As the clock was striking eleven, her aunts came up to bed. They came into her room together, holding their silver candlesticks in their hands.

"What are you sitting in the dark for?" demanded one.

"Because I want to, Aunt Charlotte."

"Why don't you go to bed?" demanded the other.

"Because I don't want to, Aunt Julia."

"What have you had for dinner?"

"Nothing."

"Why not?"

"Because I wasn't hungry."

"Aren't you hungry now?"

She was, horribly hungry. But she was far too proud to say so. "No, I'm not."

"Are you going to starve, too?"

"I suppose I can starve if I like."

"Starve, my good girl. I shan't prevent you."

"You couldn't if you tried, Aunt Charlotte."

"Your manners are insufferable, Margaret. That's what comes of not having been sent to a convent when you were young."

"You were brought up in a convent, Aunt Charlotte. I don't see that your manners are any better than mine."

"I've had enough impertinence for one day. Good night."

"Good night, Aunt Charlotte."

The stately figure in its point lace and emeralds swept out of the door. Julia remained behind.

"If you go without food at your age," she said ungraciously, "you'll make yourself ill."

"I don't care if I do, Aunt Julia."

"If you do, don't expect me to nurse you."

She stopped short, and they looked at each other across the silver candlestick. Once, when she was a little girl, Margaret Dalrymple had had diphtheria. Her two aunts had shut themselves up in her room and nursed her night and day at the risk of their own lives. They had, indeed, quarreled like cats as to who should sleep with the child. The memory of that time of devotion and pain rose before them sweet and clear.

"I'm a beast, Aunt Julia, but I can't help it."

"You're a wicked girl, Margaret. Still, if you want some milk and biscuits, there are some in my room."

"I hate your beastly biscuits." The girl bent forward with sudden ardor and flung her arms round the elegant waist.

"Oh, Aunt Julia, is Uncle William in?"

"Of course he is. Where do you suppose he is?"

"Did he read prayers?"

"Who else do you suppose read them?"

The girl's blue eyes began to flame.

"Oh, Aunt Julia, does Uncle William"—she faltered—"does he look very ill?"

Julia Champney stiffened herself like a board in her niece's arms. "Why should he look ill?" she demanded furiously. "There's nothing the matter with him."

"He hasn't had anything to eat for twenty-four hours."

"And a very good thing, too. Pity we don't all do the same."

They pecked at each other's cheeks and parted. The girl threw herself face downward on the bed. That part of her that wasn't Champney burst into a passion of tears.

A tapping at the door roused her. She flew to the door and opened it, hoping she knew not what. Outside stood the housekeeper, who had been in the family for over forty years. In her hand she held a small silver tray spread with a delicate meal. She came into the room, set down the tray and shut the door softly.

"Simmons he told me as how you didn't take your dinner, Miss Margaret. So I made bold to bring you up some tea."

"I don't want any tea, thank you."

"Oh, come now, Miss Margaret. You're so fond of your tea. I made it just as you like it, in your own little pot. And I've cut you a nice little tiddly bit of a chicken sandwich and a slice of your pet plum cake."

The girl, following the pointing fat forefinger, glanced at the tray. On the little plate painted with forgetmenots, one of her childhood's treasures, lay a slice of plum cake stuffed with comfits. It was the cake that her Uncle William loved. Try as she would to stop them, the passionate tears smarted to her eyes.

"Oh, Mittie," she said, "*Uncle William!*"

The good woman reached out and took the soft hand and patted it between her own. "There, there, dearie, don't you cry." Her fat, round moon face was alive with sympathy and love.

"Did you notice him at prayers, Mittie? Was his voice quite strong?"

"Much the same as usual on a Friday, dearie. The fasting never did suit Mr. William. It pinched him up something cruel from the first, pore lamb!"

That was true. William Champney had schooled himself into doing without most things, but he had never learned to fast. The girl's heart writhed hearing the thing she knew put into words.

"Did he look ill, Mittie?"

"Not as you might call ill, dearie. But Simmons and me did say afterward we thought he looked a bit whitish."

"O God!" said Margaret. She looked into the kind old face with despairing eyes. "What shall I do?"

"Drink your tea, dearie. You can't stand fasting no more than your Uncle William." She lifted her head and listened. "That's him and your grandpa comin' up now."

The girl darted forward to the door and listened at the chink until the voices had died away. She turned to find the housekeeper pouring out her tea.

"I've put in two lumps, dearie, and the milk in first just as you like it. Look, it's your own little cup. Same as you used to have in the housekeeper's room when you come to tea with me when you was quite a little girl. Nobody never washed that cup but me. Take a sip, dearie; it'll do you good."

To please the kindly old creature the girl put her lips to the cup. "It's lovely, Mittie; just what I wanted." She took another sip.

"You was always one for your tea, wasn't you, Miss Margaret? Same as your Uncle William. Pity he can't have one. It'd do him good."

The color rushed into the girl's face. "Mittie, I'll take him one." She flung her arms round the old woman's neck and kissed her. "You dear, to bring it to me! As soon as I hear grandpapa's door shut I'll slip along to his room with it. Perhaps he'll take it to please me. Good night, you dear old Mittie."

The old woman opened the door noiselessly and slipped down the dark corridor without a sound. It was not the first time during her half-century of service that she had sustained recalcitrant members of the family she loved with nocturnal administrations of comfit cake and tea.

Margaret finished her tea, washed the cup, waited until the shutting of the door told her that her grandfather had gone to bed, then she took the tray in her hands and slipped noiselessly down to her Uncle William's room. It lay at the end of the great corridor on the op-

posite side to her own, and opened out from a small room, half oratory, half sitting room, where, when the weather was too unfavorable for him to read in his favorite arbor, William Champney always sat.

She opened the door without knocking, expecting that she would find the room empty and her uncle already in his bedroom preparing to go to bed. Instead, he was sitting with his back to her with his arms on the writing table and his face buried in his hands.

She set down the tray and ran to him, as she had run to him when she first came to live there and his little sitting room had been the sanctuary of the proud, heartbroken, motherless child. "Uncle William!" she cried. "Uncle William!" She flung herself at his feet, encircling him with her strong young arms.

William Champney lifted his face and looked down at the beautiful child at his feet with eyes that looked almost dazed. "Margaret, you here?" He pulled himself together. "What's the matter, my child?"

"I couldn't sleep without saying good night to you, Uncle William."

He stooped over and laid his hand on her head. "I missed you, my darling, at prayers."

"I'd have come, Uncle William, but—" She stopped short. The Champneys might hate each other but they couldn't tell tales.

"Yes, yes," murmured William Champney, his fine face contracting painfully, "I know, dear child, I know."

Something in the tender, tired voice struck the girl, absorbed as she was in her own grief. She looked into his face with sudden eagerness. It seemed to her in the soft candle light to look strangely white and frail. She jumped to her feet, fetched the tray and set it down beside him. She sat down on the arm of his chair and stole her arm round his neck.

"Your own tea, Uncle William. Your own cake. You can't refuse *me*. Look! It's my own little plate and cup."

William Champney looked at her as he had looked at her that morning in

the arbor. His face grew suddenly stern; his voice was suddenly firm. "It's time for you to go to bed, Margaret." He rose as he spoke and held out his hand. She got off the arm of his chair. As she did so he caught sight of the bruise on her shoulder. He went white to the lips. "What's that mark on your neck, Margaret?"

The girl faced him without turning a hair. "That, Uncle William?" She rubbed it lightly with her fingers. "That's nothing. It's only a little bruise."

"A little bruise do you call it? I call it a very bad bruise. How did you get it?"

"I knocked myself."

"Knocked yourself! Against what?"

"Against a chair, Uncle William."

William Champney's white face began to turn red. "How did you come to knock yourself in such a place, against a chair, Margaret?"

"I ran into it, Uncle William, in the dark."

"That's a lie," said a voice behind them. They turned and saw John Champney standing at the open door. He had discarded his dresscoat, and held an ivory brush in either hand. The sound of their talking had reached him in the midst of brushing his hair. It rose above his scarlet face in great crisp waves like an aureole of spun silver silk. In his crimson silk dressing gown, his enormous stature was even more marked than in his ordinary clothes. As he advanced into the room, the sheer force of his overpowering personality made itself felt even before he opened his mouth.

"What's the meaning of this?" he demanded, glowering at them from under his great white eyebrows.

William Champney lifted his hand and pointed an accusing finger at the girl's white neck. "What's the meaning of that?"

John Champney glared at his brother as if he would like to murder him. "I did that."

"How?"

"I struck her."

"You struck Margaret's child?"

"I wonder I didn't kill her."

The color in William Champney's face began to deepen to a dull red. He took a step forward and his blue eyes began to flame. "If you had," he said under his breath, "I'd have killed *you*."

Margaret flung herself into the fray. "It was *my* fault, Uncle William."

But William Champney was past listening to her or anyone else. He stretched out his arm and with a hand of iron thrust her away. "Why did you strike her?" he demanded.

"She's disgraced us."

"How?"

"She went to town alone. She went to this man's house where he lives. She went into his rooms and stayed there with him alone an hour."

William Champney went livid. He flung round on his niece and caught her by the wrist. "That's not true, Margaret!"

The girl threw up her head, her eyes blazing. "Of course it's not true, Uncle William."

"What!" roared John Champney. "Do you dare to say I lie?"

"I dare to say anything, grandpapa."

"This is my business, John," cried William Champney. "Now, Margaret, tell me the truth."

She told it him with the simplicity of a child.

Her grandfather seized her by the shoulder and turned her round. His great hand fell heavily on the place where he had struck her, but she never flinched. "Why didn't you tell me that?"

"Do you suppose I'd condescend to explain to anyone who suspected me? Do you suppose, if I'd been mad enough or fool enough to have wanted to do such a thing, that Reggie would have let me in? Do you suppose because my family chooses to treat me like a criminal I forget what's due to myself? I went up to town to tell Reggie I couldn't go on with it. He wouldn't listen to me, but I'd made up my mind to do it all the same. I'd do anything for Uncle William. But now I don't care. You've insulted me. You've dared to strike me, as though I were your dog instead

of your granddaughter. I don't care what happens. Now I can't give in even if I would. It's too late. My oath's as good as his or yours." The words poured out of her mouth like a torrent. So fierce was the passion that gripped her, she shook from head to foot. Her body was convulsed with fury. Her face was red like fire. "I've said my say and I'll stick to it. Even if Uncle William dies, I won't give in."

"And I won't give in," said John Champney.

"And I won't give in," said William Champney.

Face to face they stood furiously glaring. Then, as if they suddenly realized to what they had pledged themselves, the rage died away and a kind of terror took its place. In the silence their breath came and went as if they had been running a race. The dying Christ on the crucifix on William Champney's table looked at them with tender, pitying eyes.

Slowly the color died out of William Champney's face. Slowly, with a movement full of dignity, he went and opened the door.

"I wish to be alone, John. Margaret, good night."

"Good night, Uncle William." The girl bent her head for his blessing, and strangling a mad desire to burst out crying, fled softly down the moonlit corridor to her own room.

XII

THERE stood Charlotte Champney. In her white dressing gown edged with ermine and her point lace nightcap, she looked like a tragedy queen. In her hand she held a great cut glass pot filled with green pomade.

"Been bothering your Uncle William again?"

"I suppose I can speak to my own uncle if I like, Aunt Charlotte!"

"I'm not preventing you, am I? Is your Uncle William alone?"

"No, he's not."

"Who's with him?"

"Grandpapa."

"Are they quarreling?"

The girl smiled a little wearily. "Do we ever do anything else, Aunt Charlotte?"

"If you'd done as I told you, there'd have been none of this trouble." She smacked the pot of pomade down on the table. "I told you what would happen if you persisted in this folly. That's what comes of being selfish."

"Is it selfish to be in love, Aunt Charlotte?"

"In love!" Had Charlotte Champney been speaking of the most degraded passion of humanity, her voice could not have held a deeper disdain. "Disgusting!"

Her expression more than her words touched the girl on the raw. Before she realized what she was saying the words were out of her mouth. "You didn't always think it disgusting, Aunt Charlotte."

It was true. Once in the days long ago, when Charlotte Champney was young and beautiful, many men had loved her, but she had loved only one. That one she had loved to madness, but her sharp tongue had proved her own undoing. They had quarreled about a horse which she had wanted to ride and her lover had refused to let her. Next day he had ridden it himself and had been brought home with a broken neck.

At the girl's words, that unlaidd ghost which had kept sleepless vigil in her heart for forty years rose up and tormented her afresh. The proud, hard face whitened down to the very lips. When she saw it, the girl was struck with remorse.

"Oh, Aunt Charlotte," she cried, "forgive me! I oughtn't to have said it. I'm sorry. Everything's so miserable that nothing seems to matter, but let's keep love out of it. It's the most wonderful thing in the world."

"It's the most terrible thing in the world," said Charlotte.

"Why terrible, Aunt Charlotte?"

"Isn't it terrible? Look at your own family history. Why did John Champney strangle his wife? Love! Why did William Champney kill his son? Love! Why did your grandfather turn your

mother out of the house? Love! Why did your Uncle William become a priest? Love! What's made me what I am? Love!" She threw up her hands. "Love's terrible. It's ruined your grandfather's life. It's ruined your Uncle William's life. It's ruined my life. Now it's going to ruin yours."

"It shan't!" cried the girl passionately. "I won't let it!"

"How are you going to prevent it?" demanded her aunt. "Do you suppose your grandfather's going to give in?" She laughed malignantly. "Do you suppose your Uncle William's going to give in?" She struck her hands fiercely together, and the diamonds on her fingers blazed with the same passion as her eyes. "Are *you* going to give in?"

"You know I'm not, Aunt Charlotte."

"Very well, then. What's going to happen? If your Uncle William doesn't eat, he'll die. If your Uncle William dies, your grandfather will kill himself. Do you think you're going to walk over their two graves to your own happiness? You fool! I warned you and you wouldn't listen to me. You'll spoil your life like the rest of us. Don't come to me for pity when it's too late." She snatched up her candlestick and went out.

The girl stood still, looking after her. She was appalled. Charlotte Champney was never by way of being a great talker, but she had the supreme if rare talent of making a thing clear to people when she did. She had brought the situation home to the girl as no one else could have done if he had talked for a year. She trembled from head to foot as she stood there in the dark.

She groped her way to the window, knelt down on the broad window seat and looked out. The night was beautiful as nights are only in June. The moon, serene and fair, flooded the great gardens with her pure white light. The cloudless sky was spangled with stars. The nightingales called softly to each other. The scent of the roses filled the air. Everything was as it had been the night before. Only twenty-four hours had elapsed since she had laved her feet with the water lilies and had danced in a

fairy ring with a song on her lips and lilies in her flying hair. Only twenty-four hours! It seemed more like twenty-four years!

With that belief in the necessity of her own happiness which is the divine right of the young, it seemed to her impossible that something should not happen to make everything go right again. Yet she knew very well that it was not always so. Nothing had happened in the case of her own mother. Nothing had happened in the case of her Aunt Charlotte. No merciful hand outstretched from heaven had snatched her aunt's lover from the leap that had killed him. No angel of mercy had intervened when her grandfather had turned her mother out of doors. What if nothing should intervene to save her?

She leaned her head against the casement and looked out into the night. That glorious moon, what was she but the shadow of an extinct world? Those nightingales whose passionate love song filled the darkness with its throbbing, what intervened to save them from their enemies the white screech owls with their sharp beaks and their eyes of flame? Those perfumed roses, things of joy and beauty, who would save them if the fancy took her to cut them off in the heyday of their exquisite life?

Why should she be any different from the rest of the world? Why should a special dispensation be made in order to save her?

Yet she could not believe it. She was so young, so full of life, so eager for happiness, so mad to seize her little share of the joy of the world and devour it, she told herself something must happen to save her. Surely an angel from God would intervene.

Tired out with excitement and emotion, she fell asleep the moment she got into bed. Like the prophet of old, in her sleep she dreamed a dream. She dreamed she stood at the gate of the little church which led to the burying place of her race. And as she stood there, her thought of the night before came true. Her people rose up out of their resting places and passed in a great procession before her eyes. The first

Champney, monstrous in height, with flaming beard, a mighty axe on his shoulder and the lust of murder in his bright blue eyes; the pale-faced Smithfield martyr, mass book in hand, on his way to the stake; the ill-omened priest, his sharp blue eyes looking out strangely from under his cowl; the gay pair of Georgian roisterers in their satin coats and powdered wigs; the dark-eyed traitress with the shifting diamonds flashing in her hands; her mother, not as she had known her, worn and sad, but young and beautiful, in the same delicate muslin as the dress she herself was given to wearing, with a rose in her bosom and the same string of pearls round her fair young throat.

Generation by generation they passed before her, sumptuous in velvet, shivering in rags, in peaked cap and mantle, in doublet and hose, in ruffs and love-locks, in patches and powder, in helmets and casques. Beweaponed, bejeweled, they passed before her, laughing, singing, swearing, cursing, all different but each one identical, carrying hidden within himself the indomitable pride, the uncontrollable rage, the two supreme characteristics of his race.

In her dream she stood, and they advanced upon her with the same suggestion of strength flowing out of them dead as it did when they were alive. She saw that they were carrying a coffin. It was the same coffin that she had known from a child in the picture that hung in the library. With a shudder she recognized its silver legs. The lid was off, and she saw that it was empty. As she looked they suddenly closed in on her, hemming her in, striking her, cursing her, demanding that she deliver up to them William Champney, the last priest of their race, the uncle she adored.

She screamed, she wept, she prayed, but they were inexorable. Closer they came and closer. She could feel their flaming breath on her cheeks. She could see their scarlet faces. She found herself looking into their hard blue eyes.

"You have killed him," they said to her; "now he belongs to us."

"I am ready," said a voice behind her,

and there by her side stood William Champney.

"No, no, no!" she heard herself crying. "Take me instead." In her despair she tried to seize him, but he vanished, and she found herself standing by the side of the coffin. She knew it was no longer empty. It stood on the great oak table in the library. At the head of it stood her grandfather. His hand was raised as if to strike her. His face was very red. "Look and see what you have done for us," he said to her. She advanced and looked down into the coffin.

But it was not William Champney who lay there. It was herself.

The shock of it was so great that she awoke.

XIII

So vivid was the dream that at first she could not shake it off. She was filled with a sense of the most extraordinary foreboding, an apprehension so acute that, instead of springing out of bed and rushing to the window to look out into the garden as she always did, she lay quite still trying to collect her thoughts. The sun came streaming in through the window; the birds were happily chattering. She could hear the movements of her maid in the dressing room preparing her bath.

The sound of the water running aroused her. She turned her head lazily and looked at the clock. To her surprise the hands were at a quarter to eight. Punctuality was a mania with the Champneys. Breakfast was at eight to the minute. Her first thought was that it must have stopped. She called to her maid sharply, asking her the time.

"It's a quarter to eight, Miss Margaret," the woman answered her. She came through the door with a can of water in her hand.

"A quarter to eight!" Margaret sat up in her bed. "What's the meaning of this?" she demanded. "Why are you three-quarters of an hour late?"

"Oh, Miss Margaret!" said the maid. She stopped short and turned to the

bed. Her mistress saw that her eyes were red from crying.

"You may well cry," she exclaimed. "You'll cry more before I've done with you. Come, answer me, what's the meaning of your being three-quarters of an hour late?"

"Oh, Miss Margaret!" The woman put the can down on the washstand and burst into tears. "It's Mr. William."

"Uncle William? What's the matter with him?"

"He's ill, Miss Margaret."

"Ill!"

"They had to send for the doctor in the night."

"What!" Before the words were out of her mouth, Margaret was out of her bed and into her dressing gown. "What did the doctor say?"

"I don't know, Miss Margaret. Mrs. Smithson wouldn't tell us nothing, but I think he's pretty bad."

Sick with terror, the girl ran down the corridor to her uncle's room.

The door was locked. She knocked. There was no answer. She waited a minute and knocked again. She knocked a third time still more urgently. This time her summons was answered. Her grandfather opened the door.

He stood there blocking up the doorway with his great shoulders. His face was gray but for two bright patches which flamed in his cheeks like fever spots. His eyes were bloodshot. His mouth seemed to have fallen in. To the girl's excited fancy it looked as if it were all awry. He glared down on her with such vindictive fury that she felt herself physically quail.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"I want to see Uncle William."

"You can't see him."

"I want to know what's the matter with him."

"There's no need for me to tell you." He made as if to shut the door. She thrust her foot inside it.

"Grandpapa, you must tell me."

"Take your foot away or I'll shut it in the door."

So quick was his movement, she had barely time to snatch away her foot before he had shut the door in her face.

She heard the key turn in the lock. She turned and ran like a mad thing to Julia Champney's room.

The room was empty. So was Charlotte's. Neither bed had been slept in. She ran back into her own bedroom and put her head out of the window. The doctor's car stood before the front door. Without waiting for a maid, she flung on her clothes and bundled up her hair and ran down the back stairs into the housekeeper's room.

The breakfast was laid but the room was empty. At the end of the passage she found old Mittie and Simmons the butler, their faces full of misery, listening at the door which divided the servants' quarters from the hall.

"What's the matter with Uncle William?" she demanded.

So intent were the pair of them that they didn't hear her until she spoke to them. They turned and looked at her aghast. "Miss Margaret!" they exclaimed.

"What's the matter with him?"

To her horror they both burst into tears.

She took the old housekeeper by her shoulders and shook her. "Answer me at once," she said, stamping her foot. "What's the matter with Uncle William?"

"Oh, my dearie," gasped the old housekeeper, stifling her sobs, "I don't know. The mistress won't tell me."

"Nor the master won't tell me."

"Five and forty years have I served her come next Michaelmas, and she wouldn't even answer me."

"Fifty-one years, come midsummer, I've served him and Mr. William, and he shut me out of the room and cursed me," quavered the old man. "Me that's followed him all over the world, and took your mother from her nurse's arms before she was able to walk."

Margaret looked from one to the other in a kind of agony. She felt as if a cold hand were slowly clutching at her heart. "But you must know something. When did it happen?"

"I can't tell you, dearie," wailed the old woman, her fat chin trembling. "They never called us up nor nothing."

We didn't know a blessed thing about it till Jane come tearing up to my room to say the doctor's car was at the door."

"Why didn't you ask the chauffeur?"

"There isn't no chauffeur to ask, Miss Margaret. The doctor always drives hisself when he's called up in the night."

"Where's Aunt Julia?"

"In the bedroom along with your grandpa and the doctor."

"It's his heart I'm afraid of," the butler burst out, wringing his hands. "He never had a strong heart, Mr. William."

"'Tis the fastin' tries him so," added the housekeeper. "It's gone forty-three hours since he had bite or sup."

Margaret shut her eyes. She felt physically sick.

At that instant an under footman, whose duty it was to ring the gong for meals, came down the passage. His clean-shaven young face looked scared to death. "Am I to sound the gong for breakfast, Mr. Simmons, or not?" he asked.

The butler looked at his young mistress as if he were bewildered. She realized with a sudden pang at her heart that the faithful old man was over seventy years old. She turned and looked the footman up and down. Though she didn't know it, her eyes were exactly like her aunt's.

"Why shouldn't you ring the gong, Johnson? Have you had orders not to?"

"No, Miss Margaret," the man stammered, "but I thought—"

She cut him short. "You're not here to think but to do as you're told. Ring the gong at once!" Without a look to right or left, she ran up the stairs the way she had come. She went to her own room, shut the door and locked it. She looked at herself in the glass. Her heart was beating to suffocation, but her face showed no trace of the tumult inside her save for the two red spots that flamed on her white cheeks. She smoothed her hair; she put on her bracelets; she adjusted her soft, white blouse. The gong was still booming as she went down the stairs.

XIV

In the breakfast room at the table sat her Aunt Charlotte opening her letters. Her fresh linen gown might have come out of a bandbox. On her elegantly dressed head not a hair was out of place. Had it been the Day of Judgment her appearance would have been the same.

The girl advanced into the room and looked at the table. Her place was not even laid.

She stood resting her hand lightly on the back of a chair. The atmosphere was so charged with suppressed vitality, the tension was almost visible to the human eye.

"What's the matter with Uncle William, Aunt Charlotte?"

Charlotte Champney looked up from her letters. "Nothing."

"Is he coming down?"

Charlotte Champney took up the silver tea caddy and began to fill the teapot. "No, he isn't."

"Why not?"

"Because he chooses to stay in bed."

"Is Uncle William ill?"

"Why should he be ill?"

"If he isn't ill, why is the doctor here?"

Charlotte Champney looked up from her tea making with a stony glare. "I have yet to learn that the other members of the family are accountable to you for what they choose to do, Margaret."

Too sick at heart even to quarrel, the girl turned on her heel and went silently out of the room. In the hall she met her Aunt Julia coming down the stairs. She, too, was immaculate in appearance. Her white linen gown was the perfection of simple elegance. Her hair was dressed with its usual precision. Her gold chatelaine, encrusted with turquoise, jangled softly at her slender waist. She was sixty-two, and had been up the whole night, but there was not a trace of fatigue in her blue eyes, and her complexion was as fresh as a girl's.

Her niece flew up the steps to meet her. "What's the matter with Uncle William?"

"What should be the matter with him?"

"If he isn't ill, why is Dr. Wyndham here?"

Julia Champney turned her head and looked at her niece. In the bright sunlight her face was like a mask. "I didn't know we had to ask your permission if we wanted to see the doctor, Margaret."

The girl stamped her foot with fury. "Am I to be treated like the servants, Aunt Julia?" she demanded passionately.

Julia Champney's thin lips tightened themselves into a straight red line and she surveyed her icily. "Your face looks far from fresh this morning, Margaret. Have you taken your cold bath?"

The girl's face flushed scarlet. "I didn't know I had to ask your permission if I wanted to go without a bath, Aunt Julia," she said insolently. She pushed past her as they reached the hall and ran into the little room where the telephone stood.

"Oh, Reggie! Uncle William's been taken ill in the middle of the night."

"What's the matter with him?"

"I don't know; they won't tell me."

"Have you seen him?"

"No; they won't let me."

"Then how do you know he's ill?"

"The doctor's here."

"Then why don't you ask him?"

"I'm going to before he goes. Oh, Reggie, they say his heart is weak!"

"Who says his heart is weak?"

"Aunt Julia. Oh, Reggie, I saw Uncle William last night. He looked most frightfully ill. His darling face was quite white. What shall I do if he gets really ill?"

"He won't get really ill."

"How can he help it if he doesn't eat? It's forty-eight hours since he had anything. Reggie, I'm *terrified*!"

"Well, leave off being terrified."

"I can't. Honest Injun, I'm so frightened I'd give you up if I could. But I can't."

She could hear him laughing. "No, I should jolly well think you can't."

"I don't mean what you think. But I've sworn I won't give in, and I *won't*!"

"If you did give in, I'd kill you. How would you like that?"

"Reggie, don't laugh. It's serious.

You don't understand what it's like. You don't know Uncle William. He'll die, but he won't give in either."

"Bet you he gives in the minute he sees me."

"*You!* Grandpapa wouldn't let you inside the door to save his life."

"Bet you he lets me in the minute I send in my card."

"Reggie, how can you laugh when I'm so miserable?"

"Don't be miserable then."

"You'd be miserable if you could see how miserable they are."

"I'd be jolly glad. They've behaved like beasts to me."

"We've behaved like beasts to them. Oh, Reggie, I had such an awful dream last night."

"Tell me."

"I dreamt I was in the churchyard, and all the Champneys got out of their graves and went past me in a great procession."

"Great Scott! I'd like to have dreamt that."

"They said they'd come for Uncle William. They had a coffin with them. It stood on the library table as it always does."

"I know, the one with the silver legs."

"How do you know it has silver legs?"

"Thought reading, my child."

"Reggie, do be serious. Who told you it had silver legs?"

"You told me yourself, silly."

"I'm sorry. I don't know what I'm saying. I'm as nervous as a cat."

"Well, go on with the dream. The coffin stood on the table. What happened then?"

"Grandpapa stood at the head of it. He told me to look in."

"What did you see? Uncle William?"

"No, myself."

"That's all right."

"What do you mean that's all right?"

"Dreams go by contraries."

"Well?"

"You saw the Champneys get out of their graves. Well, that means they can't. You saw the full coffin. That means it was empty. You saw yourself lying in it. That means it wasn't you. You dreamt of a funeral. That means

there's going to be a wedding, which being interpreted means you're going to marry me."

"I shall never marry anyone. If Uncle William dies I shall cut my throat."

"I should wait till he's dead if I were you. Packed your bag?"

"As if I'd had time to think about packing bags!"

"Well, go and pack it then. I shall be down in about an hour." He laughed. "Just in time for a nice little talk over family affairs before lunch."

"Reggie, don't laugh!" she cried.

"Whom are you speaking to?" said a voice behind her. She turned, with the receiver still in her hand, to find her grandfather standing in the door looking at her. "Whom are you speaking to?" he demanded.

Margaret Dalrymple threw up her head. "I was speaking to Reggie."

With one stride John Champney was at her side and had snatched the receiver out of her hand. "How dare you speak to that young blackguard again after what I said yesterday?" he roared. "You shan't use the telephone again in my house!" He seized the loops of cord and tore at them like a madman. In his fury he wrenched the entire thing away from the wall. "You dare to stand there laughing and talking while your Uncle William lies dying upstairs!"

The girl went white as a sheet. "Grandpapa, it's not true!"

"That's twice you've dared to tell me I'm a liar. By God, it's the last!" He threw the receiver onto the floor with such force that it shattered into pieces. "I say your Uncle William's dying. It's you who've killed him. Get out of my sight! Get out of my house! There's not room in this place for you and me."

She fled before him up the stairs. Her one idea was to get to her Uncle William's room. But her grandfather was too quick for her. Despite his years, he came after her like a whirlwind, intercepted her as she reached the top, took her by the shoulder with a hand of iron, ran her before him down the passage and thrust her into her own room. He seized the key out of the door, shut

it and turned the key from the other side. She was locked in.

XV

MARGARET'S sense of personal indignity was so great that for the moment it overwhelmed every other thought.

She stood in the middle of the room, shaking with passion, asking herself how she could get out. The door was a block of solid oak five inches thick, the lock a huge piece of seventeenth century mechanism with a silver key nearly ten inches long. The dressing room was an old powder closet converted into a bathroom. The only way to it lay through her own room. There was no way for her to get out but by the window. She ran and looked out.

As chance would have it, at that instant the doctor came out of the house. He was an old friend of the Champneys who had attended them for years. All his life he had been a slave of Charlotte Champney, who treated him like dirt. Margaret leaned out and called to him softly.

At the sound of her voice he looked up and waved his hand. In obedience to her beckoning finger he came forward and stood under her window. She realized at once that his upturned face was strained and worn. She put her finger to her lips and bent over the sill as far as she dared. "Don't speak loud," she whispered, "or they'll hear."

"Who'll hear?"

"Grandpapa and the aunts. I don't want them to hear."

"Why don't you come down then and speak to me here?"

"I can't. I'm locked in."

At any other time his look of blank amazement would have made her laugh. "Whatever for?"

"There's been a row. But never mind about that. Tell me about Uncle William. Is he really ill?"

The kindly old face, looking up at her, changed perceptibly. "Ill, child? He's dying."

"Dying!"

"If he has another heart attack like the one he had last night, I won't guarantee to pull him through."

"But he's had heart attacks before."

"Yes, but he hasn't refused to take his medicine before."

"Did he refuse to take it last night?"

"Nothing would induce him to."

"Why didn't you make him?"

"Make a Champney?" He threw out his hands. "You're all as mad as hatters. The whole lot of 'em, including your grandfather, sided with him against me. It's suicide."

"No," said the girl under her breath; "it's murder."

"Well, I must be off. Get the servants to let you out and go to him. He was asking for you just now." The kindly old man went back to his car and drove off.

She stood looking out of her window, holding onto the curtains swaying to and fro. Her uncle was dying. *Dying!*

"And it is *I* who am killing him. I've killed Uncle William! My God! My God!"

The earth and the sky rushed together. The giant trees slid into the lake; the lake jumped up to the sky. Something went cracked in her head; she pitched headlong, face foremost onto the floor.

With the return to consciousness came the knowledge that she had made up her mind to give in. Her uncle must be saved no matter at what cost. Strangely enough, her decision brought her neither relief for her uncle nor sorrow for herself, but only a feeling of the most intense self-contempt. All her passion, fury and terror were gone, swallowed up in the thought that she, who had thought herself so strong, should be so weak.

In all the storms that had shaken her young life, nothing had been comparable to this madness of feeling that raged through her. In all the family history such a thing had never been known; they had sinned, suffered, died, but they had never broken their word. She would be the first to break that supreme record. She would be the first Champney to give in. For the moment she hated her

mother, who, in marrying outside her own people, had given her a paternal inheritance of weakness which made this thing possible to her. "I'm not a Champney at all; I'm only a Dalrymple," she told herself bitterly. She gasped at the thought. All her life she had been brought up in the supreme faith of the family; nursed on its legends, fed on its history, taught its traditions before she was taught to write or read. She had taken it as a matter of course that she was the same as the rest of them. In losing her right she seemed to have lost all that was worth living for.

For the first time she realized what a glorious inheritance such a birthright is. For the first time she thought with a passion of regret of the cousin in Madras.

Still her uncle must be saved at no matter what cost.

"I'll give in and save Uncle William," she said to herself over and over again like a child repeating a lesson, "but I'll never speak to one of them again. I'll give Reggie up, but when he goes I'll go with him. I'll go into a convent and never set eyes on one of them again."

She got to her feet and stood in the middle of the room, darting her eyes to and fro like a wild animal planning its escape from a cage. She looked at the clock on the mantelpiece. Its hands stood at half past eight.

The things she had taken off the tray the night before still stood on the table in her room. The sight of the food made her suddenly realize that she had eaten nothing since lunch the day before. She went over to the table, and for lack of a cup emptied the teapot into the milk jug. The bite of its acrid flavor was morbidly pleasant to her taste. She stood there resolutely eating and drinking until there was nothing left. "If I were a Champney I shouldn't need it," she said to herself. "As I'm only a Dalrymple, I suppose I can't do without my meals any more than the housemaids." Her fury increased with every mouthful she took.

Her Aunt Julia's remark about her bath recurring to her, she went into the dressing room and turned on the water.

She undressed herself deliberately and took her bath. The cool water fell on her burning body with a shock like ice falling upon fire.

She emptied a bottle of eau de cologne into her basin and laved her face until it was as fragrant as a flower and as cold as a stone. She looked at herself in the mirror and noticed how white it was. "I've not even a red face," she said to herself. In a paroxysm of passion she struck her own reflection in the glass.

She brushed her hair until it shone and glittered like so much living gold. She folded it round her shapely head, pinning it with the great amber combs, smoothing and patting it until there was not a hair out of place. She brushed her teeth and manicured her nails until they shone like glass. She put on a white dress that she had never worn before.

Out of her trinket box she took an old silver gilt chatelaine that had been her mother's and hung it at her waist. She put on a pair of thin brown walking shoes. She went to the great wardrobe and took out her white cloth motor coat and her motor bonnet with the pale blue silk rosettes and a long cream veil. She laid them carefully on the sofa together with a pair of new white gloves.

Then she looked at the clock. It was five minutes past nine.

She fetched a bag from the dressing room, a little plain brown leather bag that she sometimes used to carry her tennis shoes. As she passed her dressing bag, a gorgeous affair with gold bottles and tortoise shell brushes, a present from her grandfather, she kicked it with a vicious passion that stung her foot. She took the bag into her own room and began to pack it with clean handkerchiefs, sponges and brushes and a pair of bedroom shoes. She had come into the house with nothing; she would take nothing when she went out. Of all that she was leaving behind her, the family jewels, the priceless pictures, the historic house, the glorious grounds, even her own girlish possessions, extravagantly luxurious gifts lavished on her day by day—of all these things she took no heed whatever.

Perhaps she was more Champney than she thought.

She opened her purse and took out a sovereign. That sum would take her as far as the Convent of the Sacred Heart in Chertsey. All the Champney women had made their profession in that convent. They would welcome her with open arms. She flung the sovereign into the bag and stood looking round the room before shutting it to see if she had forgotten anything. Her mother's portrait, framed in pearls, looked at her from the mantelpiece with questioning eyes. She flicked it a solemn glance and passed it by. The gold easel with the ivory miniatures of her two aunts she passed over as if they had been the pictures of strangers. Her grandfather in all the vigor of his splendid old age, with his head erect and his hands behind his back, looked out from his massive silver frame, dwarfing the other portraits with his dominant look. At the sight of it a look that was like a spark of fire leapt into her eyes. She ran forward as if to seize it; then she stopped. A lesser rage might have found satisfaction in destroying it. Hers lay too deep for that.

On a gilt nail over her bed hung her rosary. The little silver chain with its mother-of-pearl beads and its little silver cross had been her Uncle William's first gift to her. Of all the things she possessed it was the thing she loved most. She went slowly to the bed and took it down from its nail. As she did so she remembered that for the first time in her life she had forgotten to say her prayers. She stood there letting it slip through her fingers, and for an instant her face grew less hard, as though its touch brought back to her remembrance many holy and tender things. She made as if to put it into the bag; then she snatched back her hand. "Dalrymple," she whispered passionately. She snapped to the bag and flung the rosary upon the bed.

Her beautiful face in its unaccustomed pallor wore an uplifted look of remote calm that made it almost spiritual. No one could possibly have guessed that that radiant calm hid a raging, seething passion of hate, any more than one

would have believed that the dainty dress hid a bruise as black as the fury that lay across her soul, blotting out its light as the sun is blotted out by an eclipse.

She sat in her chair motionless, erect, waiting for Reggie and his car. As she waited, the flood of feeling in her rose steadily, drowning every landmark of affection until it seemed to her as if her heart had never known any other emotion but hate. The more she thought of her grandfather the more she hated him.

She thought of his face as he had raged at her in the library; she recalled his pointing finger when he had told the servant to take away her chair; she went again and again over the episode when he had blown out her candle and put it back on the hall table. The bruise on her shoulder throbbed and ached as if it had been seared with a hot iron.

Yet all these things were as nothing compared to the fact that his will had been stronger than hers, that it was he who was going to make her give in.

XVI

THE key turned in the lock and Julia Champney came in. Her eyes were blank of all expression; her face was very red. She glanced at the coat and hat on the sofa and the bag on the table but showed no sign of surprise. The girl was a Champney and had been insulted. As a Champney she could not be expected to stay.

"Your Uncle William wishes to speak to you." She threw the words at her niece as a grudging hand throws a bone to a dog and walked out of the room.

Her niece got up and walked after her. Her soul was seething with an intensity of feeling that filled her with a fierce, strange joy. It was as if some unseen hand had let loose all the passions known to humanity and they were fighting to the death in her heart and head. The merciless sun smiting through the open windows into the great corridor renewed in her a senseless rage for her lost happi-

ness. She longed to tear it out of the blazing heavens and thrust it, quenching its burning forever, into the fathomless sea. The sound of the sweet birds chattering infuriated her to such madness that she could have torn them out of the trees and crushed their joyous singing into eternal silence with her own hands. An insensate desire beset her to fall on the elegant figure she was following and beat its false placidity into a fury resembling her own.

Yet she was going to give in. *She was going to give in.*

In the carved oak bed where the great Elizabeth had once rested her virgin head, lay William Champney. His ascetic face, white as his pillows, rose out of his black cassock with the sharpness of outline of a cameo. His breath came in short, faint gasps. His frail hands, lying motionless on the red silk counterpane, were waxen like the hands of the dead. Round his neck hung the jeweled crucifix. The diamonds in the crown of thorns, shifting with his tremulous breathing, emitted strange flashes of iridescent color, blue, green and crimson, like the flames rising from the logs of a driftwood fire.

At the foot of the bed sat Charlotte Champney fiercely sewing. By the side stood her grandfather furiously smoking his pipe.

At the sight of William Champney's face so changed, so white, so inexpressibly dear, the girl ran forward and fell on her knees beside the bed. He opened his eyes and looked at her and laid his hand in tender and solemn blessing on her head. She caught the hand and kissed it. All the love that was in her seemed to rush out of her lips.

"Uncle William," she said passionately. "I've come—" She looked up and saw her grandfather standing on the other side of the bed. She stopped short and her face went crimson. It was as though she had been suddenly struck dumb.

She let go her uncle's hand and got to her feet. Her heart began to bang. Her pulse beat in her wrist like a clock gone mad. The blood burnt in her veins as if it were liquid fire.

The flood of feeling surged up like a volcanic upheaval of the sea from its ocean bed. Like a tidal wave it rose above her, towering mountain high. It broke, burst, swept down on her, beating her, stinging her, crushing her, overwhelming her with its vast and implacable strength. Her soul went down before that furious onslaught of emotion. It staggered, gasped, reeled, and came back to itself out of the jaws of death.

She had come into her inheritance, and she knew it.

Not to save her uncle from death, not to save her soul from perdition, could she forswear herself. She was caught in the grip of something stronger than herself. The curse of her race was upon her. She could die but she could not surrender.

She was Champney through and through.

The dying man put out his hand and caught hers with a feverish strength. It was as though the divine intuition of death had made clear to him the agony she was passing through. She looked down on his white face and asked herself with a sensation of remote surprise how she could ever have contemplated the possibility of giving in.

She stood there coldly surrendering her hand to that agonized clasp which stirred no answering agony in her. She looked into her own heart and saw there the sin, the passion, the strength of those who had gone before her; the men and women who had lived and died in obedience to the mysterious command of nature, to make her, in her turn, what she was.

She looked into the future and saw herself defrauded of her youth, bereft of love, a nun without a vocation, offering herself an unwilling sacrifice to God.

As in a vision she saw the ghost of England's great queen lying in the bed before her with rouged face and scarlet wig, looking with fierce dying eyes at the ring her dead lover had sent her. She, too, had been one of those who die and don't give in. In her misery she could have cried aloud to her grandfather the words which have come echoing down through the centuries: "God

may forgive you but I never will." She looked into his face convulsed with passion and saw in his eyes a reflection of her own anguish. It was like looking into hell.

The hand holding hers relaxed. The labored breath came in short, hard gasps. An expression of agony flitted over the pain-racked face.

"Uncle William! *He's dying!*" She rushed to the little side table where the medicine stood, filled the glass and held it to his lips.

Her grandfather bent across the bed and snatched back her hand. "Would you betray him as well as kill him?"

"If he doesn't take it he'll die."

"Then let him die." He snatched the glass out of her hand and dashed it to the ground.

The sound of the shivering glass was like the shattering of the happiness of her own heart.

At that moment came a knock at the door. No one stirred. In her exalted mood it fell on Margaret's ears like the mystic hand of reconciliation knocking at their hearts.

The door opened slowly and Simmons the butler appeared. In his hand he held a salver with a card on it. The old man shuffled softly to the center of the room. Then he stopped. "A gentleman to see you, sir."

John Champney strode toward him with his hands thrust out as if he would tear him to pieces. Then his eyes fell on the card. "Who is it?"

"Mr. Richard, Sir John," quavered the old man.

John Champney seized the card. "Good God! It's Richard Champney!" His voice rang through the room. "William!" he cried. "It's the boy from Madras!"

William Champney feebly opened his eyes. "Richard!" he whispered. "Show Mr. Richard in."

The five pairs of blue eyes glued themselves to the door as the old man disappeared.

In another minute he was back again. "Mr. Richard Champney."

He threw open the door and Reginald Carew walked in.

"*Mr. Carew!*" screamed Charlotte Champney.

"*Who?*" cried Julia Champney.

"*What!*" roared John Champney.

They advanced upon him as one man, their blue eyes flashing with fury, their faces scarlet with rage.

"*Help!*" cried Richard Champney. Debonair, dashing, he stood, looking down at them from his enormous height of nearly six feet four with his sparkling blue eyes. He looked over at Margaret Dalrymple, who stood as if turned to stone.

"I told you he'd see me," he remarked coolly, nodding his head.

"See you?" she stammered. "But you're Reggie Carew!"

"No, I'm not. I'm Richard Champney."

"Richard Champney be damned!" roared John Champney.

The young man eyed him calmly. "He probably will be, sir, if he takes after his kind."

At that Charlotte Champney threw herself forward, screaming with rage: "If you're Richard Champney, why didn't you say so before?"

The handsome young man laughed maliciously. "My dear Aunt Charlotte, you can hardly wonder I'm not in a hurry to claim relationship with you."

Julia Champney thrust herself past her sister. "And pray what proof have you to offer that you're a Champney?" she demanded furiously.

Richard Champney flashed his blue eyes in her direction. "My likeness to you, dear Aunt Julia."

Margaret Dalrymple fled to the mantelpiece and seized the photograph of the cousin in Madras. "Then what does this mean?" she cried, holding it out at arm's length.

Her lover began to laugh.

"Then it isn't your photograph!" cried the girl. "I mean, it's not Richard Champney's!"

"You must be fools if you ever thought a Champney could look like that."

"Then it's *true?*" she gasped.

Her grandfather thrust his herculean

frame between her and the laughing young man.

"If you laugh, I'll break every bone in your body," he roared.

"Break away, sir," said the young man. "I'm not afraid of you."

For an instant the two of them, the old man in his extremity, the young man in his magnificent youth, stood and glared at each other. No question as to the family likeness then. With their blue eyes and their scarlet faces they were as like as two peas in a pod. Then the old man's hand fell heavily on the broad young shoulders. "Is it true?" he whispered hoarsely. "For God's sake, Richard, is it true?"

"Of course it's true, sir." Richard Champney smiled radiantly down into the four scarlet faces, and his own went white.

John Champney suddenly began shaking as if he were stricken with the palsy. "It's true," he whispered. "My God, it's true! He's Richard." Then he turned to the bed. "William," he shouted, "William, it's Richard! He's come home!"

At the words Richard Champney dropped Margaret's hand that he was holding, looked past her and caught sight of the frail figure in the bed. "Uncle William!" he cried. "Oh, Uncle William!" He pushed past them with as little concern as if they had been nonexistent and dropped on his knees beside the bed.

William Champney opened his eyes and smiled. It was the smile of the saint who, entering upon the end of his martyrdom, beholds with rapture the beatitude of God.

"You are welcome, Richard." The words fluttered feebly through his parched lips. He raised his feeble hand and laid it on the young man's head.

Richard Champney seized the frail hand and kissed it. Then his handsome face turned red. "You fools," he cried passionately, "standing there staring! Why don't you give him his medicine? Do you *want* him to die?" He leaned over, snatched the glass from the table and held it to William Champney's lips.

There was a breathless silence while he feebly drank it down.

For a moment they all stood round the bed with their eyes fixed on the white face. Then as the color began to creep back into the wan cheeks and the labored breathing grew easier, they all began to talk at once.

"Damn it, sir," cried John Champney, "how dare you behave in this way to me?"

The young man's blue eyes flashed ominously. "How dare you behave as you did to me, sir?"

"You fool!" cried Charlotte Champney, leaning over the end of the bed. "Why did you take another man's name?"

"Why did you take my mother's teapot with the amber spout?" returned the young man.

"If you'd told us you were Richard Champney there'd have been none of this trouble," said Julia.

"If I'd said I was Richard Champney there'd have been worse trouble. She'd never have married me at all."

Margaret said nothing. She was too dazed to speak. The revulsion of feeling was terrible. The angel had intervened and saved her. But what if he had come too late!

Suddenly her grandfather roused himself like a man coming out of a dream. "Get out of here!" he roared. "Go and do your cackling outside!" Like a flock of sheep before the shepherd he drove them out of the room. Then he shut the door and locked it and went back to the bed.

"William," he whispered softly.

William Champney opened his eyes and smiled. "John!"

"Oh, William! William! *William!*" John Champney fell on his knees by his brother and cried like a little child.

Outside the sun was shining and the birds were singing. But if the birds had been shining and the sun singing, the Champneys wouldn't have cared.

They were too busy quarreling as to which of the three, if Reginald Carew hadn't been Richard Champney, would have had to give in.



DOUBT

By Catherine Sisk Macomb

IF I could but believe the thing
That deep within thine eyes I see,
My heart would hear the bluebird sing
A rose and silver melody,
And ghosts of gardens everywhere
Would fling lost fragrance on the air.



JUDGING from the number of divorces nowadays, the marriage tie must be only a "half-hitch."



THE man who boasts that he "works with his head" should not forget that the woodpecker does the same thing, and he's an awful bore.

MAGAZITIS AMERICANA— A DIAGNOSIS

By John Gould Fletcher

THE THING WITH THE PINK COVER

THREE articles in which Uruguay and Lebanon
And Talavera prove convenient pegs
For smart reporters' style and drawings made
From photographs: for more nutritious fare,
There is a Yale professor's lexicography,
And another man's talk on guinea pigs: from Oxford.
(All fully illustrated with best photographs).
Poems by women blush at the ends of the pages:
A few sly digs make one almost weep at the end
(I wish, though, they would bury that "bird and worm" joke):
And for a last vast shattering trump of culture,
The ineffable, ineffable name of Humphry Ward.
While the editor, helplessly jammed in the same old armchair,
Watches somebody painfully achieving another woodblock
From a photograph of the *n*'th American masterpiece.
Great is the camera; great, oh, great is culture!
I do not question it; nor do you, reader.
No doubt the people who buy all this are satisfied:
They are immune from insomnia forever.

THE THING WITH THE DUN COVER

This thing has plunged—almost head over ears—in Art
(Big A, please, printer); for its color blocks were famous
In the days of my tender youth, the eighteen nineties.
They were quite good, those color blocks: but they tempted
One to read the stories to which they were attached,
Which stories had run from the pen of Henry Van Dyke
(I never have forgiven this form of subtle corruption).
There was many and many a frequent illustrator,
And among them the American Giorgione,
The phonograph of fairy tale, Maxfield Parrish:
Nowadays this thing favors an imported person;
Who is rather clever, too, at mechanical draughtsmanship,
And draws capitols and railway stations and suburbs
And chateaux and chicken coops and the gorgeous East of Wordsworth.
While the English Pierre Loti supplies the text from Baedeker.
There is also a professor exiled from his fair Columbia.

O America, what would you do without your inevitable professor?
 There are several more standing attractions, but what these are
 By the body and blood of God I do not know.
 The name of this thing, O reader, should be *The Æon*:
 That would be the only justification for its existence.

THE THING WITH THE YELLOWISH-BROWN COVER

Herein you may see the last and the greatest arcana:
 To wit, ex-Presidents; and novelists of England,
 Who of course are of very good family and write with a purpose;
 Also similar novelists from Virginia and Kentucky,
 With polite memoirs by America's most cultured ambassadors,
 And decorative artists (not Puvis nor Gauguin
 But Blashfield. O reader, have you never heard of Blashfield?
 Then go straightway and buy and increase your knowledge!)
 Also dry farming: of course, there must be *some* concession
 To vulgar bourgeois appetites: dry farming and forestry,
 With a dash of engineering, are sufficiently arid topics
 We trust to prove that we mean to write with a purpose.
 Sometimes we take a header into social reform
 And emerge unscathed: for no one ever reads us.
 No—one—could—ever—ever—*possibly*—read—us!
 What else are ex-Presidents for but to warn you off at the outset?

THE REVIEWS (SO-CALLED)

Articles, crisp, succinct and heavily quoted
 From encyclopedias and other sacred treasuries of learning,
 Such as books that are usually not copyright in America:
 "A New Tariff Policy," "Rational Art,"
 "Cotton Bale Making," "The Reform of Religion,"
 "Optimism and Asteroids," "A Home Up to Date,"
 "Hens as Egg Layers," "Socialism and Crime."
 Photographs with these of the world's greatest thinkers:
 Political cartoons culled from the press of the earth:
 The plots and the titles of all the best-selling novels:
 And at the end of this clipped and scissored assortment
 Of miscellaneous rubbish, lexicography comes, for digestion;
 With a *souçon*—oh, just a *souçon*—of mushy poetry
 Also carefully extracted by diligent fingers
 From the world's ragbag.

This is what they call a "Literary Review" in America:
 This quick lunch counter of indigestible remnants was fashioned
 By the angular brains and joints of bespectacled schoolma'ams;
 Abetted by certain local centers of culture in the Middle West.
 It is treasured by Chautauquas and Lake Mohonk conferences,
 And as a proof of America's superior up-to-dateness
 It beats anything that ever happened, *I reckon*,
 And proves that Europe is still in the outer darkness.
 In Europe they still cling to the sadly barbarous superstition
 That reviews were not primarily made to enlighten the illiterate.

THE "NATIONAL" OR "AMERICAN" THING

For this thing Washington fought and Lincoln died:
 For this thing we declared ourselves free and independent:
 For this we have life and liberty and pursuit of happiness
 (We pursue happiness far, very far, through these pages);
 This is a thing which is steeped and soaked in patriotism:
 It is "national," and it believes in "The People."
 (Shall not the board of directors have their motor car journeys through Europe?)

Here are stories and pictures of him and her and the yacht,
 By those Siamese unspeakables, Chambers and Gibson:
 Uproarious comics: cosmically sentimental poetry:
 Photographs of reformers thinking and actresses undressing
 (It takes all sorts to make a world, even in America).
 Above all, this thing is disinterestedly unsectarian:
 Religion being out of date and no money in it.

O society leaders who give freak banquets in Newport,
 Matinee girls munching your Huyler's chocolates,
 Half-baked enthusiasts for the latest social reform gospel,
 Immigrants in the slums of a hundred cities
 Set free to be cheap and sweated American labor
 By the grace of God and the power of Ellis Island;
 Fall down on your knees and thank your gods every day
 That there is still one thing cheap left in America:
 That *this* thing, boosted by breakfast foods and safety razors,
 Still offers its bait at the seventh part of a dollar.

MORAL

America, my child, is a fearful and wonderful country:
 Half its magazine readers are as dry as a bale of statistics,
 So that no new ideas dare ever approach them
 For fear of the resulting conflagration:
 The other half, to avoid this plague of Saharan culture,
 Proceed to stand under a tap of tepid sentiment
 Till they are wringing.
 America truly is a fearful and wonderful country.



KNOWLEDGE is power, but at the same time many a girl is single because she knows too much.



SELF-ASSERTIVENESS is not always the sign of a hustler: how does your foot feel when it is asleep?

PRONOUN PEOPLE

By Hildegard Hawthorne

WHOO are the pronoun people?

I dare say we all know some specimen of the tribe. They meet you in the city boarding house or subway; they hang over the fence between two village cottages or foregather round the stove at the general store. The ocean liner carries them back and forth; they hurry about in automobiles; they live in offices, palaces and huts; they sit at restaurant tables; they wither slowly in the so-called "homes" for the aged and indigent.

There are three classes of pronoun people: the gossips, the story tellers and the egotists. Of them all, the story tellers are the most deadly. Like the Ancient Mariner, they will not let you go. But, unlike him, they never tell you the story. They lose themselves in a vast sea of "And then I says," "He says to me, he says," "I says, says I." You listen, stunned, hypnotized, by the endless repetition. It beats on your ears like the multitudinous waves of the ocean. Like something without beginning or end, your tormentor drones on, crowding pronoun on pronoun, packing space with them, stumbling uneasily away from one "says I to him" for a few uncertain words, only to rush back rejoicing to a new "he says, says he." Take the pronouns away from such a person, and to all practical purposes he would be stricken dumb. He hasn't even a bowing acquaintance with the other parts of speech, and his ideas rest on "he," "she," "I" and "they" as a house on its foundation stones.

But this class, though terrifying, is not unkind. It's the gossips who are that. The true pronoun gossips are knockers. They hobnob in area ways, over back fences and at tea tables. They exchange confidences in corners at a dance, behind counters in shops, at the crossroads between farms. You can hear their voices rise above the rattle of cars: "I tell you, she's no better than she should be . . ." "I always knew he drank . . ." "She paints; he told me so . . ."

The third class is the one that cannot get away from capital "I." Swing the talk into whatsoever channel, this type will unfailingly bring in him or her self, swamping the kindly give and take of conversation with a fatuous wave of "I—I—I." They use this deadly pronoun like a bludgeon, thumping every head within sight, downing all except another of their own breed. And how they hate each other!

"Conceited ass!" they mutter furiously. "Can't the idiot see I know twice as much as he does about the matter? Why, I—"

Pronouns, like curses, come home to roost. In the eternal din of their thin little voices, the nobler and finer music of existence is drowned.

Which leads one to advocate a new slogan:

"Swat the Pronoun!"



SOCIETY will always hold together so long as there is slander to be talked.

A CRYING SHAME

By William Hamilton Osborne

FRANKLY, I'm all in. I have just returned from that little kitchenette apartment—Beauty's two-room apartment in the Bronx—where I went to pay my last respects to her. I could not look upon her face. The coffin lid was clamped down tight.

Even *he* was not allowed to look upon her face—he, the young chap with the hollow cheeks, with the deep lines in his face. I can see him now as I write these lines—I can see him sitting huddled, dejected, in a corner of that little room. I can hear his helpless tones again:

"What am I, sir? Have I no rights, even now? Am I never to— Ah, what's the use? I might as well go with her. I might as well . . ."

But he won't. The answer to that is the child who sits upon his knee—the boy, wide-eyed and wondering.

The boy—what rights has he? By what name shall *he* be called?

Tomorrow I shall be in Washington. I shall appear before the National Divorce Commission—it is sitting now. And I'll tell the Commission her story—Beauty's story.

It was an evil day for Beauty—I call her such, for everybody called her that—when the big New York politician drove his big car into the heart of the Sussex hills. I need not mention his name—it's a name that everybody knows; and for years now in the law courts it has been linked with Beauty's name.

He is a politician, this man, and something more—he is a millionaire. Which may be cause and which effect, I cannot say. Beyond all that he is still something more—he is a brute—he always was a brute and always will be. If you

don't believe it, read his interviews that have appeared in every paper in New York for the last two days. Even now he is laughing in his sleeve—laughing at the tricks he played on Beauty.

He went into the Sussex hills on business. By the Sussex hills I mean the Jersey Sussex hills. He went there possibly to grind out the financial life of some poor country merchant.

The point is that after he had lumbered out of his big car, after he had clambered heavily into the hotel bar, after he had refreshed himself sufficiently, he walked down the village street.

And walking, he saw Beauty. The sight of Beauty startled him as it startled everybody. She was entirely different. He had spent his leisure hours looking at painted women. He had forgotten there was any other kind. This girl was like the free air from the hills. He saw her once. She was standing at the half-open gate in front of a well kept little cottage. But her uncle was the man he had come there to grind under the merciless heel of his big boot.

And so this big man saw her many times. He wanted her, of course, and what he wanted he was bound to get. From the very start, so I am informed—and of course it must be so—Beauty shrank from him in horror. Repeatedly she snubbed him, but repeatedly and regularly he advanced his suit. Once a week, every Saturday afternoon, the huge snub nose of that big car thrust itself into the village. Its owner no longer leaned against the bar, however. Something about Beauty may possibly have softened him. But there was another reason. Beauty had a mother, and this big politician saw that to

win Beauty he must win her mother first.

He was a diplomat. He could be as gentle as the dove, if it suited his ends. He became as in the twinkling of an eye a courtly gentleman, and he made obeisance to the head of the house. He knelt at a shrine. That shrine was Beauty's mother.

Beauty still repulsed him. She had many reasons, and one of the reasons was another man. That man was the man I left two hours ago, clinging to that chubby little boy. But the startling difference between these two was this: that one man could command as many millions as he liked and the other hardly had a dollar to his name.

The big politician never stopped. It was a hard battle, the hardest he had ever fought, and one he did not understand. Up to date his experience had been quite different. Women had fought each other—sometimes tooth and nail—for his favor. Hitherto, he had merely to beckon, and they would come. Beauty merely shrugged her shoulders and avoided him. It was the kind of warfare he had never learned.

Suddenly, however, a powerful ally came to his aid—nature. Beauty's mother was an invalid—possibly an hypochondriac—but unquestionably an invalid. It is probable that she desired this big New Yorker for her son-in-law. It is probable that she fought Beauty to this end quite as eagerly as he. It may have been this unwonted strain that broke her down. At any rate, something brought her to the brink of the grave. The local doctors said so, and the New York specialist that the big politician brought with him in his car confirmed their opinion.

Something must be done and done at once. Beauty and her mother had no money. Her uncle, the nearest of their kin, already tottered on the verge of ruin, and the condition of the mother meant the expenditure not of hundreds but of thousands and thousands of dollars. It was to be a race with death—a long race—to cover years. It meant Florida in the winter and the seashore and the mountains in the summer; the

most delicate of foods, the greatest care. It meant nurses, specialists.

The mother got all this. Beauty married the big man that she might have them.

Beauty and the New York politician, man and wife, moved to his big house in New York. Six months later, notwithstanding all the care afforded her, the mother died. It was ascertained then that she would have died within that time anyhow. Nothing could have kept her alive. Beauty had sold her happiness for no purpose.

I need not repeat to you the details of the personal habits and the private vices of this big politician. For years they have been common gossip in the city of New York. Once this man had married Beauty, once he had her in his clutch, he dropped his role of diplomat, he slumped back into the brute.

Beauty was game. She suffered, but she suffered in silence. She had taken her choice. She had made her bed and she proposed to lie upon it. She stuck to her bad bargain.

And then something happened.

A child—not a man child, but a baby girl—was born to this ill assorted couple. Its father would not even look upon it—because it was a girl. He had advertised among many kindred spirits in his cafés and his clubs the advent of a young chip of the old block. His disappointment knew no bounds. He plunged full tilt into a debauch that lasted for two months. When he came to his senses another curious thing had happened. Beauty's beauty had departed.

This was the last straw. This slave that he had bought had failed him at every turn. He cast her aside like a soiled glove. He turned her and her girl child out of the house.

Let me repeat that. He turned her and her girl child literally out of the house. And there were people who heard him say the words and who saw him do it. It was an event in the legal history that I am about to detail.

Beauty, cast off, went back to the Sussex hills where she belonged. She earned a living somehow. By her side

through it all stood the other man, waiting patiently.

This was in the State of New Jersey. In due time local counsel in the little village filed for her a bill in chancery—a bill for absolute divorce. The ground on which he filed it was desertion—constructive desertion. The big politician still lived over in New York. He no longer came into the State of New Jersey, or if he did, no one knew when. Certainly he never came into the heart of the Sussex hills. So Beauty's solicitor served him in the only way possible in such cases—by publication. A copy of the notice was mailed, pursuant to the statute, to the husband. Undoubtedly he got it. It never came back. But he was as silent as the grave—he gave no sign.

Beauty, in due course, obtained her absolute divorce. And then, in due course, she did the only thing there was to do—she married the man she ought to have married first.

Other things happened in due course. Ambition stirred in the breast of Beauty's new husband. He was still young. He worked hard for Beauty and for Beauty's child, and after a while he got a summons from New York. This summons meant a good salary—a good living. It was the stepping stone possibly to great success.

He went to New York first and came home at weekends. They were waiting for something to happen. And when it happened—when Beauty's boy was born—they all went to New York to live. Beauty went shuddering. But, as her young husband pointed out, there was no reason for apprehension. In the first place, she was divorced. In the second place, there wasn't one chance in four million that the path of the big politician would cross theirs. But Beauty still shuddered, so they placed miles between themselves and the huge beast that she feared, and took an apartment in the Bronx.

You will understand that they were happy, very happy. Beauty, who had lived in purgatory, enjoyed paradise all the more. Her young husband, too, had peered into the depths during those years of Beauty's torture, and now he trod on

air. There was no cloud on the horizon. These two people viewed life through rose-colored glasses.

Years passed—a few years only—and then the inevitable—for it was inevitable—happened. Fate plucked that one chance out of four million and placed it in their way. Beauty came face to face with her first husband on the street. He saw her, recognized her. He saw something else. A fatal thing had happened—Beauty's beauty had returned. The big man wanted her again, and what he wanted he was bound to have.

Somehow he trailed her home, found where she lived, found out all about her. He gnashed his teeth when he found that she had borne to her second husband a chubby, fat-faced boy. He saw the boy and he saw the little girl. They were comely children, both. The girl was just another Beauty. It is to be hoped that she has but little of her father running in her veins. He noted all their happiness and he hated it. But he wanted Beauty, and he thought he knew a way to get her.

You will be surprised—because no newspaper account of this incident appeared—when I tell you that he stole the boy. He didn't steal the girl—but stole the boy and took him to his home. He thought Beauty would follow, but she didn't. The boy's father followed, and the big politician, notwithstanding his political supremacy, surrendered. He had done too bold a thing, and he could not justify it. All this time, you understand, he knew his rights. Let that fact sink in—he knew his rights. And he proceeded to enforce them.

The first thing he did was to arrest Beauty for bigamy. It was then that Beauty came to me—Beauty and her husband. The house that employed her husband sent them to me. They had gone her bail—and it was heavy bail at that. She had given them her promise to answer to the charge and not to leave the State. In their gentle, broad-minded, genial way, the employers of her husband had pooh-poohed the charge—had told her it was blackmail, nothing else. And then, as I have said, she came to me.

She was beautiful—and all the more

so for being in some trouble. Of course she and her young husband talked both at once. The burden of their song was the outrage that had been put upon them and the ease with which this charge could be dismissed.

I listened patiently for half an hour, and then I brought them up with a round turn.

"Sit still," I said, "and let me ask some questions. Just answer as I ask. Do nothing else."

I got the story from them, bit by bit—the story of Beauty's absolute divorce in Jersey and the story of their marriage in the Sussex hills. You who read this will understand just how I felt—how it tore my heart to tell them the real truth. But I told them. It was better to have it over first as last.

I got down two little books—I needed only two. One was that fateful Volume 201 of the United States Reports. I opened to page 562. This, I told them, involved the divorce suit of the Hadlocks.

"Let me read to you," I said, "what the highest court in the United States had to say about their case."

I read and explained it to them. I could see the terror in their eyes as I went on. But I was not through. I picked up one of the New York reports. In that Volume 125, Appellate Division, on page 915, there is an opinion written by a judge whose eyes were filled with tears.

"Listen," I told these two unfortunates before me, "to what the New York courts said in the Ransom case."

And I read it to the end. I stood up and turned away from them as I read this peroration:

"This unfortunate state of the law relating to divorce by which a divorce is regarded as valid in one State and void in another, with all the deplorable consequences which shock the sensibilities of decent men and women and bring untold disgrace and misery on their innocent offspring—"

They stopped me there. I felt the clutch of each upon my arms. I turned to see the horror in their eyes—a horror, which, as months went on, turned, as I knew it would, into the grimness of

absolute despair. Now, fortunately for them, this horror was mixed with incredulity.

"But," protested Beauty's frank-faced husband, "she got her divorce—she got it straight—over in New Jersey."

"Granted," I returned. "But she obtained it upon an order of publication against the defendant."

"But the Chancellor signed it," protested Beauty. "It must be a good divorce."

"It is," I returned, "absolutely good—in Jersey."

"We married there," she said.

"Ah!" I commented. "And in Jersey your marriage is absolutely good."

I could see that they thought I didn't know the law. They hoped I didn't, anyway.

"How about New York?" queried Beauty's husband. "Don't they grant divorces here on an order of publication?"

"Of course they do," I answered, "and so does every State, and what is more, every State recognizes its own divorces granted on its own orders of publication, but it won't recognize another State's divorces granted in that way."

"I don't believe it," blurted out the man.

Beauty said nothing, but I could see that she didn't believe it either.

I made them sit down at my desk and read those two things over—forced them into doing it. I saw her husband glance furtively at the title page of each of the reports. He wanted to make sure that I was not palming off some counterfeit law upon them. Even then they refused to realize—refused to understand.

"Now," I said to them, "the best thing you can do is to go back to Jersey. In the State of New Jersey you are man and wife and your child is legitimate. In the State of New York—"

I did not finish. They understood me, at any rate, if they didn't understand the law.

"Go back to Jersey," I repeated.

"We can't go back," said Beauty's husband. "Here is this charge of bigamy. My people have gone bail, and

Beauty has promised not to leave the State."

It may have been her promise that kept her in New York, but it was something else besides. The big politician was a man of power. I told Beauty and her husband that they need not worry over the consequences of the charge of bigamy, for under the circumstances no judge would sentence her—probably no jury would convict her. But the big politician had not made the charge for the purpose of obtaining a conviction. He had had another reason. He was powerful. It was his intention—and one that he could successfully carry out—to keep that charge hanging over her head indefinitely.

And from the moment that he made the charge, Beauty was never free from surveillance—her footsteps were dogged constantly by shadowers. She not only would not leave the State—she *could not*. Then this big politician attempted to enforce his rights. He was her husband. Under the decisions he was her husband still, and her only husband. In the purely legal aspect of the affair they had overlooked one thing, and so had I.

One day they rushed into my office pellmell. They stood before me clinging desperately to each other.

"Have we any right," they gasped—"any right to live together?"

And, of course, they had not. What is more, they must not live together. Now that they knew the law, now that they had full knowledge of the situation, graver charges might be brought against them. I told them. I could not help but tell them.

The office building where I sit day after day looks out upon a noted churchyard. It faces Trinity. As I outlined to them on that day their future course of conduct, I could see the life go out of Beauty's eyes. I could see her staring at the gravestones in that graveyard. Later, when she came into my office many times, I saw her staring at those headstones . . .

Well, as you already know, the big man didn't get her. She was his wife—his lawful wedded wife. By the law of his domicile, by the decisions of its

courts, she was still bound legally to him. He was entitled to all the rights that the law gave him. But he did not get them. So he fired his second gun. He brought suit for absolute divorce. He had a right to bring it. He had good grounds. Beauty had been living with her second husband—and by law he was not a husband.

He brought his suit for divorce, and he served her personally within the State. I appeared for her, and then he made his motion—his motion to obtain the custody of the girl—his child.

I am not going to tell you the details of the hearing on that motion. There are some scenes I cannot describe. Let us view it from afar off. The father here was in the right. He was bound to get his decree of absolute divorce. But there was something more. The mother, by her own admission, was at present almost penniless. How could she rear the daughter of a millionaire? Clearly, not by accepting money from her alleged second husband—from the man who was bound to her by ties which were legally illicit. Her daughter was the daughter of one of New York's wealthiest men. He had an establishment. He had the means to provide governesses, to place the girl in the best schools in the country, to take care of her health, to clothe and feed her. On the one hand, care according to her station—care of a beast in the midst of a bestial, boisterous crowd of men and women companions. On the other hand, the care of a mother—and a wonderful mother, it is true—but what else? Nothing but poverty.

So she went, that young girl, into the gilded hell that the law had provided for her. She was torn—literally torn—from her mother's arms. She was taken to her father's house.

Beauty and her husband kept within the law—kept to the spirit as well as to the letter of it. They met only in my office. Beauty took her tiny kitchenette apartment and lived there with her boy. Of course her husband—I still call him that—supported her. He did it through me.

The divorce suit dragged on. We had no defense to make, and we made none.

You know how it must have felt to them to sit with folded hands, unable to fight, and that huge brute playing his waiting tactics held that bigamy charge over her head so that she might not get away, and protracted the uncontested divorce suit.

He knew well what he was doing. He knew that Beauty was eating out her heart in her desire to see the girl. He knew that some time she would come to him. He told her frankly what he was going to do: that when he got his absolute divorce, he was going to see to it that the decree contained a provision prohibiting her from remarriage for at least five years. He was going to base his application upon the ground that after she had known the law—after he made that charge of bigamy against her—she had lived for a brief few days with this other man, in defiance of good morals as well as of law.

It made no difference what I said now. I could see that his threats were more powerful than my assurances. I could see that blank, black despair had settled down upon this young woman. But she gritted her teeth. She kept a stiff upper lip.

I learned what she was doing all this time. I knew that day after day she skulked, a piteous object, around and about in the neighborhood of that big house—knew that she was watching for the girl. I knew also that she never found her—never saw her. The tantalizing taunts of this big brute continued. He wrote her letters calling her husband names, calling her names, and what is more, calling the boy names. He threatened and cajoled her. But all through he kept hammering at one thing. He told her there was but one way to end it all—for her to come and live with him.

Her answer was silence, a desperate and despairing silence. It was no use: she was fighting still with the kind of warfare that he never could understand.

All during this time she would come to my office and sit gazing out upon the graveyard. There came a time—and only recently—when I missed her. I felt, as every lawyer often does: my client was taking counsel of someone else.

I was right. She was taking counsel with herself.

Suddenly, for some reason best known to himself, the big man entered his interlocutory judgment of divorce. Had Beauty come to me, I could have told her it was not absolute—that it would not be absolute for months to come. But she was beyond asking the advice of counsel. She found out somehow that a judgment of divorce had been granted. That was enough for her.

And then she went boldly up the steps of that big house and rang the bell. She was admitted. I have since learned just what happened.

He was there, this big politician; possibly her shadowers had told him she was on her way. He was there waiting for her. He started to grasp her with those huge hands of his.

"So," he exclaimed, "you have come back to me, my pretty! I knew you would."

She stepped back. "Don't you dare to touch me," she exclaimed. And there must have been something in her voice that cowed him. "Don't you dare to touch me. I am not your wife. If you touch me, all New York will know it. I came here to see Amy. Is she here?"

His manner changed. He became almost gentle. He hid his claws in fur.

"She is here, and you can see her, pretty one."

He sent for the girl and the girl came. She rushed into her mother's arms. I can conceive at this time that the girl must have seemed well taken care of, and that there was upon her face merely a wistfulness, a longing—but beyond all, a look of woful misunderstanding.

It was a part of this man's cunning to leave them there alone—to let them talk together, to let the girl plead with her mother to come there and stay—stay forever.

How long they were together I do not know, but it is clear that someone called the girl away. It is clear also that she went, and then the brute came back and started in again.

I can see Beauty telling him again with all the ferocity of a cornered wild beast that he must keep away from her—that

she was no longer his wife. And then I know, because she told me but a moment later, what he said. He told her that the decree was only interlocutory—only temporary—and that they were still husband and wife.

"If you don't believe it," he exclaimed, "call up your lawyer. He'll tell you the truth. If you don't believe it, read this decree."

He showed her the decree and she read it. Then she called me up.

I told her the truth. I told her that until some months were up she was still this man's wife. She recognized

my voice. She believed what I said. I knew that by the despair in her tones. Then she hung up the receiver.

You know the rest as well as I do. You have read it in the daily press. You know that she came there with something on her person, and that when this brute locked all the doors and crushed her in his grasp, she drew forth this something—a revolver—and sent a bullet crashing through her head.

That is why they wouldn't let me look at Beauty's face and that is why I go before the National Divorce Commission at Washington tomorrow.



MÉDITATION PATHÉTIQUE

By Ludwig Lewisohn

I HAVE not touched your hand nor kissed your hair,
I have not held you close my whole life through,
The burning words I have not said to you
That hang forever silent on the air.

We shall go softly, slowly, side by side,
We shall grow old at last, but day by day
Comes nearer that great hour when I shall say
The immortal words that in my heart abide.

And God's tall angels of the choiring throne,
Seeing us thus, will with deep murmurings
Fold over pallid faces argent wings,
And wonder that we dared to walk alone.



BAKER—Before marriage Manning said he'd like to see his wife hung with diamonds.

BARKER—And afterward?

BAKER—Oh, now he omits "with diamonds."



SOME men toot their own horns so loudly that they do not even hear the hisses, and so get blissfully by for a long time.

THE HOME-RETURNING

By Richard Burton

'TIS we who live that vagrants are; the dead
Are not poor outcasts from our love, but rather
The seeking souls who earlier have sped
To where friends gather.

Just every little while, one slips away;
Almost we hear their greeting from those others:
Our loss must make for them a happy day,
Brothers to brothers!

We who remain draw closer each to each;
We smile as best we may with each tomorrow;
But oh, our spirits know there is no speech
To tell our sorrow!

Not theirs the grief, we say, not theirs the grief;
Our ranks grow thin, while theirs increase forever:
No hearth a-cold, no falling of the leaf,
No friends that sever—

Until we long to be of their good cheer;
Oh, with what heartfelt, wistful yearning
To join that company select and dear,
The home-returning!



A MODERNIST'S LEXICON

By David A. Modell

ENTHUSIASM—A good motive power but a poor steering wheel.

HEROES—Fanatics who succeed.

HOBBIES—Indispensable lubricants for the grinding routine of modern life.

BACHELOR—One who would rather be free than comfortable.

CONSTITUTIONALLY UNFITTED

By Frederic Taber Cooper

“WOMEN,” averred Howard Boynton sententiously, as with nice judgment he selected the largest sweet potato in the dish—“women are constitutionally unfitted to take care of money.”

“But, Hoddy dear, that five dollars can’t be lost. I just know it will turn up some time,” rejoined Mrs. Boynton with valiant optimism, which a slight quiver of her lips belied. The amount of the loss was not in itself momentous; it was her husband’s masculine assumption of superiority that rankled. Besides, as she knew from experience, he had an annoying tenacity of memory for wifely shortcomings.

“Whether it ever turns up again is not the point,” Boynton insisted doggedly. “The whole trouble with you is that you don’t stop to think. You let yourself act from impulse. Remember the time that you threw away that perfectly good necktie of mine without asking me? And the telegram that you sent off, saying that I couldn’t meet Wainwright, after I’d actually started to meet him?” Mrs. Boynton sighed imperceptibly. These episodes were more than a year old; it was hardly worth while to remind him that it was he himself who had flung the necktie into the wastebasket, and who had explained, while filling out the telegraph blank, that the message was of vital importance, and then had left home, not saying where he was going, and apparently forgetting to send it.

“Take another chop,” she suggested, with almost too obvious diplomacy. “I had them breaded especially.” But this diversion failed of its purpose. Before the second chop was half consumed

Boynton was once more harping on his grievance.

“I wonder what would become of my clients,” he debated ironically, “if I were as slipshod as you are, and couldn’t remember where I put things, but trusted to their turning up some time or other? I tell you, Flossie, the only way to succeed, whether you are running a big office or a little housekeeping account, is to be careful of your money—to know where you put it, and put it where it’s safe. Why, just to show you how I never take any chances, listen to what happened today: I’ve got here in my pocket right now”—he dropped his voice and glanced around cautiously to assure himself that Olga, their recent Swedish acquisition, was not within hearing—“what do you think? *A package of fifty hundred-dollar bills!* I brought them home for safekeeping, and they’re not going to be mislaid, and there isn’t going to be any waiting around for them to turn up!”

“But, Hoddy dear, what on earth made you bring home such an awful lot of money? It frightens me, just to think of its being in the house! You know what a scare there has been lately about burglars—it was only last week that the Palmers had their house broken into and some silver taken; and last night the Smiths had a fright—they heard a queer noise in the cellar; Mrs. Smith was telling me all about it this morning at market.”

“Nonsense, Flossie.” Boynton’s impatient tone was obviously prompted by the implied criticism of his judgment. “The money was brought in too late today to bank it. I could have put it in the office safe, of course; but the safe is

really only for legal papers, and the managing clerk has the combination. Laidlaw is a new man, been with us only two months—"

"Not that sneaky-looking man with the drooping eyelid? Oh, I don't like him, Hoddy! He isn't to be trusted!"

"There you go again, jumping at conclusions! Laidlaw's right enough; I wouldn't have taken him on if he hadn't been recommended. But Wainwright's as bad as you, always getting fool notions. He doesn't trust him, either. So I wasn't taking any chances."

"Howard, something happened to make you suspicious!"

"Flossie, you make me tired. Suspicious nothing! I was simply locking up my desk this afternoon and giving Laidlaw some last instructions about a complaint he had to serve tonight, when he leaned over toward the envelope with the money in it, and asked quite naturally: 'Do you want this to go in the safe before I close up, Mr. Boynton?' Now of course he couldn't have had any idea what was in the envelope, unless he had been listening at the keyhole—and that's too ridiculous to think of; he probably thought it was old Middleton's will—yes, he has drawn a new one; that makes the ninth. But I'm telling you all this just to show how careful I am. I merely said: 'No, Laidlaw; you can lock the safe and close up. I am taking these papers with me, to look over at home.'"

"And to think of your bringing all that money, loose in your pocket, with that long, lonely walk up from the station! Why, you might have been followed and robbed! It frightens me to think of it! Even now it isn't safe; if anybody knew—"

"Yes, but that's just the point, Flossie," Boynton rejoined testily: "nobody does know, and nobody's going to. I'll put the envelope away in my desk and lock it, and we'll both forget it's there until tomorrow morning. Hello!" with sudden alertness. "It's later than I thought. If there's any sweet stuff, can't you hustle it along? I've got to be at Judge Raynor's at eight thirty sharp. Say, Olga, which is it tonight, pie or

dumplings?" he added, as the Swede bustled in with her usual smiling alacrity.

"You're not going out tonight?" exclaimed Mrs. Boynton in keen dismay. "Why, Hoddy, have you forgotten that you promised to help me address those invitations to the reception? They didn't come till this afternoon. I meant to tell you about them, the first thing, but losing that five dollars put everything else out of my head. They simply must be mailed tonight, or they will be too late. One can't give people less than ten days' notice of an 'at home,' and tomorrow is Saturday."

"Sorry, dear; I forgot all about it. I'd stay at home if I possibly could. But it's—it's a very important committee meeting; it's about the prizes for the next golf tournament. The Judge made a special point of it that I should come."

Mrs. Boynton made one more attempt. "It's Olga's night out," she said in an undertone, "and that leaves me alone in the house with all that money; and," she added with a touch of malice, "you said yourself that women were constitutionally unfitted to take care of money."

For a wonder, Howard took her sarcasm good-humoredly. "Then keep your meddlesome little fingers off of it," he retorted. "The money will take care of itself if it's let alone. And as for those invitations, I'd like to help you with them, honestly I would. But since I can't, they'll give you something to do till I get back, to keep you from imagining that the house is full of burglars. You women are never happy unless you are borrowing trouble."

His wife offered no further remonstrance; experience had taught her the futility of trying to hold him when golf was in the air. Instead, she followed apprehensively upstairs to the sitting room, equally divided between her dread of being left custodian of that formidable five thousand dollars and the no less anxiety of seeing him change his mind at the last moment and start out on a lonesome mile and a half of sparsely lit road with the money still in his

pocket. Boynton, however, with calm deliberation, lowered the lid of his desk, opened the upper left-hand drawer, laid the packet of crisp, new notes within it, locked the lid with a swift jerk of his wrist, and tossed the key carelessly to his wife.

"See how trusting I am," he said in a tone that was meant to be kindly. "Don't take the responsibility too hard. Even if you lose the key, we won't have to wait around for it to turn up. I've another one. Oh, I say, what's become of that new make of golf balls I was going to show the Judge? I laid them right there on the corner of the mantel. Why can't you leave things where I put them?"

"You had a little square package when you came home," she answered tolerantly. "You left it in the front hall on the settee."

With a muttered ejaculation which she chose to interpret as thanks, he cluttered heavily down the stairs, calling back a parting promise to be home early, and an admonition not to scare herself with bogies. Then the front door slammed with a decisiveness that seemed to say that she was already shut out from his thoughts. In all the months of her brief married life Florence Boynton had never before felt quite so keenly the depression of solitude. Throughout the day she had been looking forward to a busy, cozy evening, with Howard and herself ensconced on opposite sides of the big center writing table, folding and addressing invitations, and making the final momentous revision of the list of guests for the first reception she had given in her new suburban home. It had seemed such a valid, such a reasonable excuse for asking him to stay. As she had told him, the invitations simply *must* be mailed that evening; the stationers had disappointed her for three successive days, although she had called them up early and late, and each time had received positive promises. It had been such a relief, when she came home in the middle of the afternoon, to find the big oblong parcel awaiting her. She had not stopped to remove hat or wraps, but had simply dropped the contents

of her hands on the table and attacked string and wrapper with childish impatience. She had enjoyed a little glow of harmless vanity over her married name in the formal dignity of engraved script; for this was the first full-fledged entertainment that they had given since their marriage, nearly eighteen months ago.

And then, in the midst of her enjoyment, had come her discovery of the loss of a five-dollar bill. And the odd thing about it was that she knew the bill was still in her pocketbook when she came home. Olga had come upstairs to say that the postman was waiting to collect four cents for overdue postage, and she had opened her pocketbook and emptied its contents on the table in her search for the four pennies needed. She could even now see that five dollars as it fluttered out in the wake of a cascade of small change. It was then about four o'clock, and for nearly two hours she had spent every minute of the time in futile search, shaking out her skirts, her muff, her shopping bag, ransacking table and chairs and scrap basket for that elusive, will-o'-the-wisp greenback. Well, she now told herself pessimistically, troubles always come in threes. She might have foreseen that the evening was doomed to be spoiled, and her elation over the coming reception quenched, with Howard throwing the damper of his indifference over the whole project! And now, for the third trouble, there was the awful responsibility of that five thousand dollars! Perhaps she was ridiculous, but Howard knew how she felt, and it was downright selfish of him to leave her. She glanced nervously at the locked desk, then tiptoed across to the front windows and noiselessly drew down the shades. Her own needless caution, when there was none to hear, emphasized suddenly the lonesome stillness of the night. The tumultuous haste of Olga's ministrations in the kitchen below, always evidenced on her nights out by an extra clattering of dishes and heavier slamming of the icebox door, had already ceased, and presently the Swede's broad, somewhat vacuous features peered in at the sitting room door.

"I ban going now, if Mrs. Boynton let me." Of course! Olga was going, too! It would be unreasonable to say no. Yet a stricken sense of desertion seemed to clutch at her heart.

"Very well, Olga, but try to be in early," she heard herself saying perfunctorily, while every separate part of her cried out in a mute appeal to this other human being not to leave her alone. The back door closed vociferously, the gravel of the side path crunched under clumsy shoes, and the receding footsteps died away into the silence of deserted streets.

Florence Boynton roused herself. Really, she was too silly, scaring herself with bogies, just as Howard said she would. With an assumption of nonchalance that almost deceived herself, she attacked the invitation list, and for a time the rhythmic scurrying of a swift pen across the smooth surface of crisp envelopes gave forth a cheerful sense of companionship. Yet all the time she was well aware, even while solving vexed problems of discreet elimination of names, that every sense was tinglingly alert, her ears straining for faint, unwonted sounds, her eyes casting instinctive glances over her shoulder into the dimness of the upper hall; and every now and again her husband's arrogant little taunt that "women were constitutionally unfitted to take care of money" kept repeating itself in an exasperating singsong, until she very nearly wrote it in place of the address of Judge and Mrs. Raynor. Time and again her eyes strayed to the narrow, old-fashioned mahogany desk, that reared itself like a symbol of colossal responsibility. Was it true that a woman would not know how to take care of money in an emergency?

She, for instance, alone here tonight, with all that money lying in the one obvious place, where any thief would naturally look first of all—of course she was absurd, absolutely absurd, and Howard would be quite justified in laughing at her—but then, just supposing, for the sake of argument, that a burglar should come—supposing that the new clerk at the office *had* listened

at the keyhole! The idea kept returning, again and again, like an obsession. She had conceived a strong prejudice the one time that she had caught a glimpse of him at the office. There was something furtive and tricky in the slight droop of his left eyelid. Well, supposing that he or anyone else should try to break in, and she should hear it? What could she do? Throw open the window and call for help? That was the disadvantage of having settled in a new part of town, with five vacant houses to the north and a whole city block of unimproved land to the south of them, while the rambling bulk of the public school reared itself into the night, like some deserted medieval fortress, just across the street. To be sure, there was the telephone, in the little closet connecting the sitting room with the bedroom. But the police station was a mile away and Judge Raynor's house half again as far. Long before help could come, the desk would be broken open and its contents rifled. Besides, she felt quite sure that she never could muster the physical courage to cross the room and take down the receiver. She could already picture the stealthy approach of a cautious footstep and a chill circular pressure on her temple, at the very moment when Central was answering her call.

The little clock on the mantel, striking the hour of ten, almost surprised her into a scream by its unexpectedness. She had worked herself into such a state of purely imaginative alarm that what at first had seemed only a remote possibility was now a tangible reality, a thing to be expected from moment to moment. Her sense of duty loomed up, illogical, abnormal, overwhelming. What could she do? She kept asking herself the question, almost on the point of tears. Hide the money? Yes, of course, that was the thing to do. Why hadn't she thought of it before? But where could she hide it? That was the question. It suddenly seemed as though every nook and cranny of the whole house was painfully, glaringly out of doors. Her glance ranged the four walls of the room in conscious helplessness.

There seemed to be no place of hiding that would baffle a clever thief for even five minutes. The best scheme of concealment, she knew, was often the most obvious, something so open and evident that the seekers would pass it by a score of times, looking straight at it with unseeing eyes. She had read ingenious stories of that sort; she remembered one in particular, in which a valuable state paper was crumpled up and thrown loosely into a wastebasket. But that idea did not seem helpful now; she couldn't very well hide fifty hundred-dollar bills by crumpling them up and throwing them into the foolish little be-ribboned basket beside the desk! And all the while that these thoughts kept hammering inside her brain with staccato speed, her pen continued to drive headlong, almost mechanically, across the ever diminishing stack of envelopes. Suddenly there came a crisp crackle, a flutter of green, and from a package of envelopes, where it had mysteriously wedged itself, dropped the missing five dollars.

In her overwrought need, the recovery of the lost bill meant neither a balancing of her housekeeping account nor a triumph over her husband's ridicule. Chance had solved her problem: here was the hiding place she had been looking for, a hiding place which had baffled her own patient search for fully two hours. A tension somewhere at the back of her brain seemed suddenly to have relaxed. She was so pleased with the new inspiration that she clapped her hands childishly and laughed aloud, a little triumphant ripple of sheer elation. "Unfitted to take care of money" indeed! Well, she would like to see any mere man hit on a cleverer idea! She plied herself once more to her task, with all her bogey fears exorcised; then started into tingling alertness at a sudden slight crunching on the side path gravel.

Without stopping now to question her own courage, Mrs. Boynton slipped noiselessly into the little closet forming a passage between the sitting room and the bedroom. It contained not only the telephone receiver but a window overlooking the side path. One glance

showed her that there were two men just below, who seemed to be working at something, she could not make out what, but certainly not the library window. Through the partially lowered upper sash, she barely caught a whispered sarcasm relative to its taking an "almighty time to cut a wire," and a throaty mutter in reply: "Gee, this here rosebush is rippin' the devil outer my hand!"

For barely an instant, she debated whether to call up Judge Raynor. No, he was too far off, and every moment counted; besides, Howard might refuse to take her seriously. She snatched down the receiver and fairly gasped with relief on hearing the accustomed response. "Central," she breathed chokingly, almost in a sob, "get me the police station, quick. . . . Yes, police station. . . . Burglars—did you get that? . . . I said 'burglars'—B-U-R-G-L- . . . Did you—" There was a queer snap, and the soft droning in the receiver stopped abruptly. "That wire won't talk no more tonight," said the throaty voice from below. So that was what they were doing from behind the rosebush? It was impossible for them to have heard her cautious whisper to Central—the one fear that racked her was that Central herself had failed to understand.

In the next breathless moment, Mrs. Boynton had unlocked the desk, drawn forth the slender package of banknotes and returned as swiftly with them to the centertable. She had an odd sense of physical numbness, an impersonal detachment amounting to utter indifference as to what might happen to herself. Presently, no doubt, she would awaken and be afraid, horribly afraid—but for the moment she was somnambulistic, acting at the mandate of some unknown and subconscious self. She knew that she was taking a mad gamble against time, in which the counters she played with were minutes, perhaps seconds. At any moment she might be caught red-handed. But then both men seemed slow, and one was clumsy—she could reckon something upon that—and they were evidently taking no chances of un-

necessary noise, and the patent fasteners on all the first-floor windows would cause some delay. And then there was the lure of the dining room, where the light still burned. They could not cross the hall to the stairs without catching the sparkle of her pretty silver. Perhaps, after all, that was what they had come for; their choosing this particular night might be pure coincidence.

Defly folded and smoothly fitted between the thick linen pages of an invitation, a single banknote, when once safely enclosed in an envelope, showed no perceptible difference to sight or touch, in smoothness or in weight. Satisfied with the success of her experiment, Mrs. Boynton pursued her task with the nervous speed of a goading expectancy, a grim certainty that it was a race between her nimble fingers and the arrival of an inevitable danger. The strident ticking of the little clock on the mantel seemed to drown out the sound of her own heartbeats; the inexorable minute hand was fairly galloping. It was ten thirty-seven when she enclosed the first banknote, and she had given herself an outside limit of ten minutes; it was ten forty when a faint tinkle of broken glass and a creaking of woodwork told her that the men were in the house. Now they were crossing the hall; her straining ears could catch their cautious shuffle. Then, after a torturing moment of uncertainty, the click of portiere rings told her that the lure of the silver had gained a respite.

Meanwhile the speeding minutes witnessed the steady diminution of the pile of notes; five, ten, fifteen addressed envelopes, stamped and ready to seal, were returned successively to the long envelope box—twenty, twenty-five, thirty, telling no tale of the trust confided to them—thirty-five, forty, forty-five—God keep those men in the dining room a minute longer!—at last the even fifty, and her shaking fingers could hardly slip the final note into place. She sank back into her chair, nerveless with the reaction. The inexorable little clock pointed to ten forty-seven exactly.

Creaking footsteps caused her to pull herself violently together. With a hand

that shook from sheer exhaustion, she mechanically resumed her task of addressing envelopes, resolutely schooling herself to keep her eyes averted from the hallway door. She did not even give a perceptible start when two strangers, rough of aspect and with little of their faces visible except the eyes, uncereemoniously entered the room. The taller and slimmer of the two—who ought to have been Laidlaw, the droopy-eyed clerk, and yet, she knew intuitively, was not—addressed her with the same sarcastic accent that she had already heard from the gravel path.

"Sorry to disturb you, lady, but we've a bit of business to put through, so I hope you won't make no trouble."

Mrs. Boynton looked at him with frank interest. "I suppose you are burglars," she said genially. "I never saw one before. But haven't you come to the wrong house? You are really wasting your time here."

"You hurt our feelings, lady, you certainly do," rejoined the man, and in spite of the muffler she could almost see his appreciative grin. "We ain't burglars; we're philanthropists, we are. Your hubby brought home a valuable package tonight, an' it ain't safe with you alone in the house, so we're just goin' to take care of it for you."

"Oh, is that it?" queried Mrs. Boynton, in a relieved tone. "You see, I don't know much about my husband's business affairs. I was afraid you were after my silver." With childlike confidence, she stretched out an invitation toward him. "You see, I am giving a reception next week, so it would have been awfully mean to take my forks and spoons!" If she could only keep them talking she told herself, for every moment's delay was priceless.

The stocky man now spoke to her for the first time.

"See here, lady, this ain't no pink tea. The five thousand's in the desk, an' you know it. Quit your kiddin' an' hand over the keys." So, after all, it seemed that Laidlaw had had no hand in this! Who could have told about the desk? There was no one, absolutely no one who could have known; no one who had even

been in the house, excepting Olga. A sudden enlightenment broke in upon her. Olga the new cook—Olga, who had come to her so well recommended by the Palmers—the Palmers, whose house had been robbed only last week!

"Gentlemen of your profession," she answered evenly, "ought not to need keys." Mentally she was doing some rapid thinking. The police ought to be at least halfway by this time—that is, if Central understood her message!

"You're a cool one!" murmured the slim man admiringly. "I wonder what your game is? Get busy on that desk, Jim," he added to his companion with businesslike curtness. There followed a sharp rasp of parting fiber, the splintered lid slipped upward into its socket, and a rain of papers, envelopes, receipted bills, photographs, the accumulated salvage of years, strewed the carpet in ruthless havoc. Presently, "Nothing doing," pronounced the slim man, and "The girl lied!" declared the stocky one in his throaty growl. And all the while Mrs. Boynton kept up the farce of addressing invitations, and all the while she was wishing with desperate futility that when Howard said "early" he would for once in his life really mean it!

Suddenly the man with the throaty voice made a dive for a piece of paper lying almost at Mrs. Boynton's feet, and showed it to his companion. It was unmistakably one of those strips with which banking clerks bind packages of bills together, and furthermore, the stout, long banking pin was still transfixing it.

"De lady is wise, all right," he said significantly. "Pinch her wrists a bit, an' she'll speak fast enough!"

The moment that Florence Boynton had foreseen, the moment when she would awaken and be afraid, helplessly, horribly afraid, was now suddenly upon her; all her valiant show of unconcern ebbed in a tidal rush. "I won't speak!" she gasped hysterically. "You can kill me, but you can't make me speak!"

"Oh, I guess we can," rejoined the slim man grimly.

The movements that followed were exceedingly rapid. Almost before she

knew it, Florence Boynton found herself tightly bound to the chair in which she had been sitting, with a strong, thin cord encircling her wrists and biting deeper and deeper at each deliberate turn of the stick thrust between its strands. "I won't tell you—I won't tell you!" she reiterated, between the darting throbs that flashed from wrist to elbow, from elbow to shoulder, until each arm seemed one living, quivering pain. And while the stocky one ruthlessly continued to twist, with methodical and maddening slowness, she could see, as part of the same ghastly nightmare, the tall, slim one's long legs making a circuit of the room with the lithe, stealthy stride of a panther, and his long, slim fingers rapidly sounding every possible lurking place of hidden treasure. And all the while, with delirious insistence, the same phrase sung itself tauntingly, diabolically over and over in her brain: "Constitutionally unfitted to take care of money!" She realized later that it was this impish *leitmotiv* alone that kept her silent.

All of a sudden a number of things happened with bewildering rapidity: from out of doors there came a call, a woman's call, in a curiously high-pitched voice; then steps sounded on the piazza, and the front door was flung violently open. Slim one and stocky one sprang simultaneously for the hall, with an outpour of profanity that formed the last conscious impression made upon Florence Boynton's brain before she fainted.

From out an unmeasured void, Mrs. Boynton struggled back to a consciousness of time and space. Slowly raising leaden eyelids, she found herself stretched limply on the sofa, and Howard bending over her, with a look of solicitude in his eyes such as she had hungered for through many a month. At the same time she became aware of the sharp pungency of ammonia and the grateful coolness of wet bandages on her arms.

"I think she will do very well now, Mr. Boynton," she heard a familiar voice say, with professional cheerfulness, "but it certainly was an obstinate fainting fit." Surely that was good old Dr. Reynolds! Had she been ill, then? Her

dizzy glance ranged the walls and carpet, took in the general chaos, the helter-skelter of papers, the splintered desk lid. Then suddenly the whole hideous memory of the evening came back in one tumultuous rush. She raised herself excitedly on one elbow. "Oh, Hoddy, those men!" she cried. "Those dreadful men!" then sank back again with a faint moan, as a fresh twinge shot through the bruised wrists.

"It's all right, Flossie," said her husband soothingly. "They're both locked up safe and sound, and our peach of a new cook along with them. The police and I met at the gate, and we nabbed her just as she was giving the alarm. All my fault, in the first place—talked too loud at dinner. But where on earth did you hide the money, you clever little woman? The whole room is turned bottom upward, where they hunted for it. They went off cursing you for the only woman that ever got the best of them!"

"The invitations!" gasped Mrs. Boynton in reply, for she had just become aware that the big envelope box was no longer on the centertable.

"Oh, the invitations!" laughed

Howard indulgently. "Give your husband credit for some presence of mind! Frightened as I was about you, for you certainly gave me a bad scare, you poor darling—didn't she, Doctor?—I remembered that you said they must be mailed before the last collection."

Mrs. Boynton gave a hysterical little shriek. "Oh, Hoddy dear, you don't mean to say—"

"Indeed I do," answered Boynton proudly. "Mailed them myself not ten minutes ago, just in time to see them taken up. Licked every darned one of them, too! How's that for devotion? . . . Why, what in the world is the matter now?" for, without warning, Mrs. Boynton had suddenly burst into peal after peal of uncontrollable laughter.

"D-d-don't—try to—st-t-top me!" she gasped between the paroxysms. "I—I-I'm—all right—Doctor—I—just—c-c-can't—help it! He-he-he s-says—he-he-he-he—he—he—he—mailed those en-n-n-n-velopes—and—that's where I h-h-h-hid the money—don't you understand?—*in the envelopes!* Oh, H-Hoddy dear, what did you say about being c-c-constitutionally unfitted to take care of money?"



NEWPORT

By Alice Duer Miller

ON these brown rocks the waves dissolve in spray
 As when our fathers saw them first alee.
 If such a one could come again and see
 This ancient haven in its latter day,
 These haughty palaces and gardens gay,
 These dense, soft lawns, bedecked by many a tree
 Borne like a gem from Ind or Araby;
 If he could see the race he bred, at play—
 Bright like a flock of tropic birds allured
 To pause a moment on the southward wing
 By these warm sands and by these summer seas—
 Would he not cry, "Alas, have I endured
 Exile and famine, hate and suffering,
 To win religious liberty for these?"

THE IMPEDIMENT

By Melville Chater

*"Do not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediment."*

THE Impediment admitted itself casually, almost accidentally, as unpleasant things are apt to do; and what follows is a broken melody of the might-have-been, a prothalamion to the Marriage of True Minds.

To begin with the converse theory—that of the affinity of opposites, it was almost inevitable that Bob Chase and his wife should have fallen in love and married. It is with parsimonious hand that Nature spreads her stock of gray matter over humanity, and as a rule the matrimonial sandwich is buttered with brains on one slice only. The Chases were no exception. Ida was pale, thin, ethereal, with serious blue eyes, a small cleft chin and the fastidious grace of a Dresden china shepherdess. She had taken degrees and postgraduate degrees, and was on thinking terms with the great minds.

The only reason why Bob ever took a degree was because he realized that too many conditions would interfere with his gaining the only diploma which he had really ever craved—an orange and black striped football jersey. Thereafter he developed into a ruddy, stoutish, well groomed life insurance man with a warm hand, an open heart and a laugh like a seismic disturbance. When Bob Chase laughed within doors, the windows rattled and ladies glanced apprehensively at their mantelpiece ornaments. He adored his wife, and during their post-honeymoon days he used to lie on the sofa every evening, listening to Buckle's "History of Civilization."

"Great stuff!" he would yawn, sitting upright with tousled hair. "Say, I

heard a good poker story downtown today . . ."

Ida always listened to his stories—which were of the vaudeville type—with perfect good humor, and the two jogged along together comfortably, yes, happily, as the world's phrase goes. Once upon a time she had imagined that he had fallen in love with her from a profound admiration of her gray matter, whereas she now realized that he had really fallen in love despite it. Like most women of her type, the Marriage of True Minds had once rainbowed her virginal horizon—a fair, unsubstantial dream, the vanishing of which she beheld, her head pillowed on Bob's muscular shoulder. Not that she would ever have had dear old boyish Bob a whit different.

After five years, when the baby had come and had died, and Bob was waxing a trifle too stout in the waist, and Ida—what with equal suffrage work, the Maeterlinck Club and the Celtic Literary Society—was waxing a trifle too high in the brow, Bob sent his wife to a seaside colony, where she took rooms adjoining those of Emily Beaufort, Ida's old friend and bridesmaid.

"By-by, old lady," said Bob as he settled his wife in the Pullman. "Need anything? Plenty of pillows?" (Bob's idea of nothing left to wish for was pillows, a detective story and negro attendance.) "Don't be afraid to work the porter; I've bought him body and soul. And you'll get a book which I ordered sent up. Saw it advertised, and thought of you. They say it's a scream."

Ida waved farewell through the window, then leaned back, saying fondly,

"The old dear!" Experience had taught her to be patient with Bob's weakness for books with at least one vivid explosion of plot per chapter—the Roman candle school of fiction.

There followed seaside delights as advertised, and rejuvenation with Emily Beaufort, whom Ida had not seen for four years. Emily was one of those delightful safe and sane persons who are as severely to the point as the Declaration of Independence. Even in college days Ida had soared, while Emily had played the role of a checking equilibrator. Since then their respective biases had become confirmed, and so, when Ida enlarged upon her clubs and her reading, and incidentally referred to the monastic conception of life, Mrs. Beaufort, who had known Bob from chunky boyhood, and was aware of his intellectual limitations, raised her eyebrows and screwed her lips like one who thinks a staggered whistle.

Presently a book arrived by post for Mrs. Robert Chase—a book and a surprise. For it was no Roman candle product, but a soberly bound volume of essays which bore the title page: "The Higher Co-education, by Maurice Carpathy, Ph.D." Co-education, as found within college walls, said the writer, was but as a signpost pointing the way to a great upheaval and readjustment between man and woman. Deploping the marriage laws—fetters of an archaic civilization—he stressed the qualifications of mental parity and reflexive inspiration, explaining that as woman attained her true intellectual status, man would seek her more rounded companionship, while the merely charming creature—she of the matinee ideals and marshmallow conversation—would die off, because of unfitness to survive; since union with her was based merely on a blind, primitive instinct which the writer defined as psychic emotive obsession. In short, he sang the pæan of the Marriage of True Minds.

And, as Mrs. Bob Chase read on, lo, at that forgotten altar of her college days she knelt once more, as one who resurrects the worship of his ancestral

gods. She perceived that for such modernly thinking men as Carpathy, Ph.D., there was a long-felt want—a general, impersonal want, of course. On the beach, at meals, by the bridge tables, she thought and talked of little else than "The Higher Co-education."

Said Emily Beaufort, at length, overdosed with the theme:

"Undergraduate nonsense. I can see him: thin, pale, timidly platonic; wears spectacles, and coughs before speaking. My dear, a man doesn't fall in love with a woman's planes of thought. He falls in love with her smile, the nape of her neck, her eyebrow. At best, it's nine-tenths physical attraction."

Carpathy arrived that evening. Yes, quite as abruptly as we have stated the fact, Ida, glancing up from her soup, found that she was under the glance of a totally strange man. Glance? Say consuming flame! Even as the shipwrecked sailor stares amazed at the sudden apparition of land, or as Dante, nigh swooning, beheld Beatrice, his fountain head of dreams, so this young man of the ascetic face, stooped shoulders and gray-tinged hair sat at gaze, eyes riveted upon Ida in tense amazement. Later the two collided while rounding a wind-swept corner of the veranda in opposite directions. "The Higher Co-education" slipped from beneath her arm and lay open, revealing marked passages. He recovered it, apologizing; then Ida said, with the tremulous little stammer which affected her in moments of embarrassment, "Th-thank you." He drew back with a strained smile and sharply caught his breath; one of those incalculable moments of silence throbbed between them, then Ida passed on, strangely shaken.

Later she learned his name through the channel of conventional introduction, smiling inwardly at the fatuous impertinence of a third person bidding them know each other; for that perilous thing called instinct told Ida that each had of the other a knowledge old and untaught, that Carpathy's bedazzlement sprang from a transcendental recognition of her soul. And she was profoundly surprised to find that

her soul was still a virgin, naked and unashamed.

For a month the rocking chair fleet on the hotel veranda watched the comings and goings of Mrs. Chase and her satellite, and jumped to the banal conclusion that, although a Ph.D. of twenty-eight may be over-serious and book-wormy to damnation's verge, where a pretty woman is concerned a Ph.D.'s a man for a' that. But little they knew. Says "The Higher Co-education": "Those fortuitous and factitious assemblings of human feature and coloring—admirable enough when expressed in the plastic arts—will be relegated to their proper position of secondary importance under the coming regime of Conscious Mating Selection."

Carpathy was an alarmingly serious young man, overweighted with book learning, unbuoyed with a first-hand knowledge of life, and of an intense, almost tremulous, sincerity, from which he sought relief by the perpetration of rapid puns. He seemed oddly averse to discussing his book, which he had written for his doctor's thesis several years before. "Mere salad leaves," he explained half apologetically to Ida; "*lettuce* forget them—ha, ha!" That he should treat the work lightly, almost as a youthful folly, left Ida gasping. Time and again she set her nets in the deep waters of philosophic debate; time and again he eluded her, frisking past into conversational shallows. It was queer. Common sense told Ida that he admired her mentality; instinct insisted that in her most flippant, inconsequential moods she swayed him with an uncanny fascination. She supposed that the man had been overworking, that he craved the relaxation of silliness. Eagerly he admitted it. Life proceeded by means of alternating contrasts, said he; games were the natural panacea of the fatigued mind.

"Games!" His eyes brightened. "Golf, now! Why not practise up for the tournament? I'm a poor hand at it, myself, but—but—" His gaze centered on her like a pin point as he added, with a queer, furtive eagerness: "Do you know, I'd just *love* to caddy for you!"

Golf followed. To remake and dis-train one's self at love's whim, such is the doom of the adorer. With infinite gladness at having found a need whereto to minister, Mrs. Chase rolled up her shirtwaist sleeves, eclipsed her high brows with a Panama and, for the first time in her life, assiduously cultivated the trivialities of a mere game. Presently, as a change, Carpathy suggested tennis—and tennis followed; canoeing—and Ida bent to the bow paddle; roller skating—and she drove three miles with him to the nearest rink. To be sure, she blistered her hands, lamed her muscles, developed the ignominy of freckles, and, being an utter novice in outdoor sports, consistently wrenched her pride for the benefit of a buzzing gallery of ladies; but the Ph.D. thrived and beamed, so she was gratefully content. Golf remained paramount; and the sight of Carpathy following her from green to green, with her bag over his shoulder and a look of almost religious devotion in his eyes, was comparable only to an acolyte swinging a censer before the niched Madonna in a cathedral.

Once, while teeing up her ball, Ida fell to whistling pianissimo, then turned to find Carpathy literally feasting his eyes upon her. He blushed like a child taken in jam stealing.

"And you—you whistle!" he murmured, as if dazzled by a rare accomplishment. "Why, how charmingly you whistle!"

Divining thereby his weakness for the musical arts in woman, Ida sang and played for him in the evenings, her severely classical repertoire soon giving way, at his pleadings, for the latest popular ragtime. He listened, wide-eyed, thrallèd. It was the old story, thought Ida, of the bizarre taste in art which so often accompanies true genius of the metaphysical type.

Emily Beaufort had revolted during the early stages of the attachment, but now the breastweight of accreted emotions urged Ida to seek her out. She explained that she had come for her advice—which is merely a lady's way of appointing another woman as the

recipient of her confidences. Bob was coming up on Saturday to see her play in the tournament, and of course the dear old thing wouldn't quite understand. Maurice and she were sensible, perfectly sensible. They had talked things over quietly, and he had told her of the great inspiration which he found in her presence. Their companionship was loftily free from the rash commonplace. She asserted the married woman's ancient chimera—that of the dutifully domestic corporeal presence and the severed soul, gravitating discarnate, as it were, to its spiritual mate, each bond without jeopardy to the other. In fact, she dwelt upon a second marriage—an ethereal union—the marriage, merely, of true minds. In time, she believed, dear old Bob would understand and approve. Meanwhile she relied upon her friend to stand by her at this critical juncture, to mediate between the trio, to assure her husband of how matters really stood. Antipathy at the outset might ruin everything.

But Emily declined to be maid of honor to the marriage of true minds. Plainly she told Ida that the latter was making a fool of herself, that Bob was not so impossible, as mere husbands go; and she dwelt long and forcibly upon his good points—than which, to a woman in Ida's predicament, there is nothing more utterly trying.

And so, not without qualms, Ida prepared to face the issue single-handed. It was her first serious experience with a bachelor attaché, wherefore it is not to be wondered at that she was a trifle nervous as she stood with Maurice on the station platform watching the New York train disgorge its weekend passengers. But fate eased the situation beautifully. When Ida had welcomed her husband with all the unwonted enthusiasm that the circumstances demanded, she turned half around, announcing lightly, "And oh, Bob, this is Mr.—"

But Maurice was no longer aware of her existence. He was staring idiotically at a girl who had just alighted from the train, a golf bag slung over her shoulder. Even as the shipwrecked sailor stares

amazed at the sudden apparition of land, or as Dante, nigh swooning, beheld Beatrice, his fountain head of dreams, so gazed Maurice Carpathy. . . .

"And I say," exclaimed Bob, taking a good look at his wife as they walked off alone, "I thought I'd find you a red Indian. Hanged if you don't look a trifle pale!"

That evening she had a better look at the newcomer, and thereat, with a sudden enlightenment as to all that the past month had contained, her world crashed about her. The two might have been mistaken for twin sisters. Each had the same pale, ethereal face, the serious blue eyes, the small cleft chin, the fastidious grace of a Dresden china shepherdess. Fate never perpetrated a more ruthless replica. Add to this the fact that Carpathy had been nursing a broken heart on Miss Trivick's account for half a year, and you will admit that Mrs. Chase had a perfect right to disappear for a three days' sick headache. Meanwhile Carpathy dogged his divinity's footsteps, and adored. She was a very sweet, wholesome girl, an adept at golf, tennis and canoeing, a captivating singer of coon love ditties; and she babbled incessantly in a most charming, brooklike manner, her conversation vitiated by not one microscopic trace of gray matter. She won the golf tournament in masterly style, Carpathy caddying.

The night before Mr. and Mrs. Chase left for town, the latter, standing at her bedroom window, saw two figures outside on the veranda and heard two voices.

"And I read it *all*, every word—your book called 'Education' or something, but I couldn't understand a single thing. And, oh, dear, it gave me the *dreadfullest* headaches!"

"I would rather caddy for you through one tournament," said the other fervently, "than write a dozen such books. . . . Yes," he admitted to the other's ensuing question, "there has been someone else—just one. It was because she reminded me of you. I'd have fallen in love with her, I suppose, if she hadn't been—well, so awfully intellectual."

THE BEST SELLER

By George Jean Nathan*

CHAPTER I

THE thief, it was believed, was not a professional. He, whoever he might be, was a man of infinite patience, of infernal cleverness.

CHAPTER II

SHE was young and pretty. She was preparing for bed; and as she let down her hair, it enveloped her satin body in a cataract as of molten gold. Her expression was placid, but it was the placidity of the certain, not of the resigned. . . . From a frame house in another quarter of the town, a quarter which had fallen long since under the edict of fickle fashion, a slender young man stepped forth noiselessly and disappeared into the night, became a shadow among shadows.

CHAPTER III

As for Burlingame, he found himself gazing panic-stricken into the round, black, sinister hole of a Savage automatic.

CHAPTER IV

"Sit down in that chair there," went on the man in the mask, indicating a superb and expensive Sheraton. "If you keep perfectly still and do as you're told, Burlingame, I shan't be forced to hurt you." . . . Thank heaven! At last! It had seemed ages! Someone was turning the key in the lock. Burlingame's eyes threatened to fall out of his head. For the young woman who entered was no less a person than she of the hair of molten gold!

CHAPTER V

WHEN a young man meets face to face the girl of his dreams . . .

CHAPTER VI

TAME seemed to grow the tales of Scheherezade. "What did he take?" she asked. "A Sèvres box," he replied. Then—"Of course, he couldn't know, but the box contained nothing save some letters," he added. She turned a bit pale, it seemed to him.

CHAPTER VII

FLYNN, the celebrated detective who had solved the mystery of the Queen's emeralds, scratched his head. "Have you got the man's thumbprint?" asked Burlingame. "Oi've got a thumbprint," returned Flynn, noncommittally.

CHAPTER VIII

"BETTER ye not let the match go out. These things give a fella the chills." Burlingame crept along at Flynn's burly shoulder. Suddenly the detective seized upon an object lying on the floor. "What is it?" exclaimed Burlingame. The detective held out his hand. In it was—a strand of hair—hair as of molten gold!

*With apologies to George Jean Nathan.

CHAPTER IX

"BURLINGAME," said Asa V. Jackson, "every man has a curtain which he cannot lift even to his best friend. But tonight I'm going to lift a corner of mine for you. Come!" Burlingame, perplexed and puzzled, followed. What was going to happen now?

CHAPTER X

"SHE's probably sleeping," said Jackson in a whisper, "but no matter. Duty is duty." . . . "Evelyn, this is my friend, Mr. Hilary Burlingame; Mr. Burlingame, Hilary—my daughter." Hilary started. Did his eyes deceive him? No, it could not be! Yet it was! It was she of the hair as of molten gold.

CHAPTER XI

BURLINGAME could not believe his terrible suspicions. Evelyn smiled sweetly. Jackson whispered something in Hilary's ear.

CHAPTER XII

"COME," she said, catching Burlingame by the sleeve. "I see it all now. It was Dick." "Dick?" he cried. "Dick who?" But she did not answer him. "Only let us hurry ere it be too late," she urged.

CHAPTER XIII

SHE was at the top of the steps, hunting for the bell, before Hilary could finish his directions to the chauffeur, who nodded boredly and nonchalantly took out a cigarette and lit it.

CHAPTER XIV

YOUNG Jackson was standing with his back to the fire. "Well?" he inquired, glancing up at the intruders. "Oh, how could you, how could you?" cried the girl, throwing herself into his arms and sobbing like a child. Hilary said nothing. His eyes were riveted on young Jackson's hair. It was hair as of molten gold.

CHAPTER XV

"HE has decided to go to South Africa. Uncle has some mines there," she said. "Poor chap, poor chap!" mumbled Hilary. "To think a mere bump on the head in a football game could cause . . ."

CHAPTER XVI

"No, no, it cannot be. I love you, but it cannot be," she articulated. "*This* stands in the way, a barrier between us. If the time ever comes when I feel that the blot has been dissipated, and you still love me, I will send for you."

CHAPTER XVII

Description of the country and sunsets around Lucerne.

CHAPTER XVIII

Description of the country and sunrises around the Italian lakes.

CHAPTER XIX

His "psychology."

CHAPTER XX

Hers.

CHAPTER XXI

"You have come," she sobbed. "You have come—I called and you came. I was wrong to—"

"Woman, my woman," was all he could say; but he held her close, close to his heart, and the voices of the night spoke for them, uttering marvelous, wondrous, mystical, presaging things.

THE END

THE RIGHT HAND MAN

By Owen Oliver

IT was the end of the hottest summer recorded at Colonia, and we were all worn fine by the sun. The civil hospital was fuller than it had ever been during my four years in charge; and then the great epidemic came. It was enteric; and it did not come alone. A liner from the East brought plague. We stamped that out quickly, but it took my senior assistant. A dhow drove ashore in a gale, and landed cholera with the coolies who were rescued. That took my other assistant.

Then the principal medical officer to the troops lent me a bright young army doctor, Surgeon-Captain O'Brien. He worked splendidly, but we were only two to do the work of six. The deficiencies of the nursing staff doubled our anxieties. It was not a question of numbers. The ladies of the garrison, in O'Brien's words, "volunteered to a man." They were courageous, charming ladies; but they had never been accustomed to do much for themselves, and made many mistakes in their attempts to do for others. They were quite untrained in nursing, of course, and none of the professional nurses seemed capable of training them. I had a young and inexperienced female staff at the moment, and it included no one at all competent to take the place of my clever head nurse, who had just left us and gone home to be married. I realized, when she had departed, from what a mass of hospital routine she had saved me.

O'Brien and I worked day and night, till we fell asleep on our rounds, but we knew that patients were slipping through our fingers for lack of more attention.

"Every hour's sleep loses a life," he told me one afternoon.

"If we don't sleep," I answered, "we shall go under and lose them all."

I drove him to bed for a few hours; and just afterward a lady called. She gave the name of Adean. I knew from the *Colonia Gazette* that she had only landed the same morning.

"Tell her that I have no time to see anybody," I directed the messenger; but she came to me in the surgery, a big, fair woman with blue eyes and a quantity of light hair.

"I was a highly trained nurse once, Dr. Hardy," she stated without preface, "an assistant matron at a large hospital. I am competent to act as your head nurse, if you will take my services on trust."

"What hospital, Mrs. Adean?" I asked.

She shook her head.

"You can test me in the duties," she answered. "I can offer no other credentials."

I looked at her keenly for some seconds. I liked her manner and appearance.

"One has to trust so much to a head nurse at a time like this," I remarked. "If I accept a woman of whom I know nothing, I take a heavy responsibility."

"And if you refuse my help," she retorted quietly, "you take a heavier responsibility. You can test my knowledge, of course."

I asked her some professional questions—a few sufficed—and had no doubt that she was well trained; but I still hesitated.

"There is more than the routine of the hospital," I remarked. "The real question is whether you can manage the female staff. Many of them are volunteers, and some of these are a trifle

'difficult.' I don't quite know how to test your capacity for management and supervision, except by trying you."

"Yes," she agreed. "Try me, Doctor. I won't fail you."

"I will try you, Mrs. Adean," I said; "but you will find these volunteer nurses a difficult team!"

I expected to have half a dozen refuse to submit to her authority forthwith; Mrs. Graves within ten minutes! She was the big, gaunt, awesome wife of a chubby little colonel. (He had a V. C., and people joked that it was for marrying his wife.)

Three hours passed and no one came to me to complain. I noticed one nurse after the other hurrying to Mrs. Adean for instructions. Things were already in better order when I went on my evening round. She accompanied me; and when I began to give directions to the nurses she usually smiled at me as soon as I began, and said: "I know, Doctor. I will see to it." I felt that a great load had fallen from my shoulders; and O'Brien declared that "the powers" had dropped us an assistant from the clouds, and that when the emergency was over she'd disappear in a flash of light.

She came to me early the next morning.

"I am asking for your confidence rather soon," she apologized. "The emergency is my excuse. May I reorganize the nursing staff? I should like to make a sort of chief housekeeper of Mrs. Graves. She is not suited to nursing, but she is a good, practical manager. She would look after the domestic economy, and leave me free for the medical side of the nursing. You are so short-handed in doctors that I think you might leave a little of the doctor work to me. I would make Nurse Jeffreys assistant superintendent of the nurses, to arrange the roster of duties and so on. Nurse Thompson should come out of the dispensing room. Miss Brand would help the dispenser equally well; and Nurse Thompson strikes me as the best nurse for operations. May I arrange?"

"Yes," I said. "Mrs. Adean, you are a godsend! When you suggest leaving some of the doctor work to you, do you

mean that you would treat cases yourself? As if you were a doctor?"

"The minor ones," she said. "You see, there aren't doctors enough now; and I'm afraid the need is going to be even worse. Captain O'Brien has gone over to the asylum ward. There's a case there I don't like."

I groaned. Hitherto the epidemic had not spread to the poor mad folk.

"Enteric?" I asked.

"It looks like it," she admitted. "I hope I am wrong."

But, as usual, she was right. The epidemic had spread to the asylum, and there was an abnormal number of new entries from outside that day.

"If it weren't for Mrs. Adean," O'Brien observed that evening, "some of the people would have had to go unattended today. I'd better go and ask the military for some tents. We're coming to the end of our accommodation, she says. She suggested the tents, in fact. She's wonderful! Even she isn't wonderful enough."

He sighed. His good spirits seemed breaking down. I felt rather dispirited myself; but when he had gone Mrs. Adean talked to me for a few minutes and restored my cheerfulness. She had a great charm of manner, and she was brave and wise.

"We shall be all right," she declared, "if you and Captain O'Brien take care of yourselves. You and he *must* have sleep, even if a patient or so suffers. It is very sad, but if you break down they will all suffer, you know. Go to bed, Doctor!"

"O'Brien is too done up for duty to-night," I protested.

"But I am not," she assured me smilingly. "I haven't had a night up yet. I'll have you called early, and then I'll take a rest."

"Mrs. Adean," I said, "you are my right hand man!"

I always called her that afterward.

She sent for me at daybreak. She met me in the passage. Her face looked very gray in the morning light.

"You are tired," I cried.

She made a sound almost like a sob.

"I shall be more tired soon," she told

me. "And you! Captain O'Brien is down."

The next few days always appear in my memory as a nightmare. I tried vainly to obtain another doctor from the military, but they had no help to give. They had lost one of their medical staff, besides O'Brien. There was only the old chief, who was crippled with lumbago and was wheeled from bed to bed in a chair, and one junior assistant, and the epidemic was raging among the soldiers, who were mostly young fellows of the worst age for it. Mrs. Adean and I did the best we could. I dealt only with serious cases, and she attended to all the ordinary ones. Every hour a young nurse would run to me and exclaim breathlessly that Mrs. Adean wanted me for someone who had taken a turn for the worse. Many cases could not have the care which they required. We felt that we were losing lives which might have been saved if we could have found time to watch them more closely. That preyed upon our minds, and even her cheerfulness failed, though she always tried to brighten me.

There was one young fellow who required an immediate operation, but I shook my head.

"It might take an hour," I told her, "and meanwhile half a dozen people may need me. Besides, he has a weak heart. I don't think he'd stand chloroform; and I can't give him ether and operate, too, in such a delicate case. He must go."

"He's only a boy," she pleaded. There was a choke in her voice. "Let's give him a chance. I think I could give the ether, and I'll try to bind him up afterward. It's his *only* chance. Give him a quarter of an hour of your time. I'll do the rest—try to."

I agreed. The boy pulled through, thanks to my Right Hand Man. She collapsed afterward. Pierce old Mrs. Graves put her to bed.

"I love that woman!" she told me stridently.

"Why," I thought, with sudden enlightenment, "so do I!"

I was under the impression that Mrs. Adean was a widow. I decided that, as

soon as the epidemic was over, I would ask her to marry me.

Things were worse the next day. A number of cases—particularly among the women, who hitherto had suffered least—took a bad turn, and some went.

"We must have another doctor," Mrs. Adean told me suddenly.

I turned toward her sharply. I feared for a moment that she was becoming hysterical under the strain, but her face was composed.

"From heaven?" I asked bitterly. It had hurt me to see patients go, who could have been saved.

"From the asylum ward," she said steadily.

"The—asylum—ward!" I echoed.

"The asylum ward," she repeated. She made a sound, as if she were hurt. Her lips moved in and out unsteadily. "Harmer was a doctor once."

"The man who wears his coat inside out?" I said. "And won't have his hair cut? He has a wooden lantern and goes about looking for something that is going to cure him. I don't know what it is."

"It is his wife," she told me.

"How do you know?" I asked.

"He is my husband!" she answered in a very low voice. She swayed and caught at a chair. I picked her up and set her in it.

"I loved you," I said. "But that is neither here nor there."

"No," she muttered dully. "Only—I did, too. I came to Colonia to see if there was any hope for him. My name isn't Adean, but I did not want to be identified. He was a clever doctor, but his reason went, and before anyone realized it. They might have died anyhow—I don't know. Some of these would die anyhow. I think he would save more than—I have no doubt of it, if he will try. I think I could persuade him, but— He hasn't seen me yet. I don't want him to. *You* go and ask him. Try to keep him to Wards A and B. I will stay out of them."

"Very well," I assented.

I went. I found Harmer fairly lucid, but he would not listen to my suggestion.

"The fact is I'm mad, Doctor," he ex-

plained. "I should only kill them. I shall always be mad unless I find my wife. *She* could make me as sane as you. I don't say it was her fault. It was D. T., and other things. Only—you see, I drank because I knew she didn't care for me. It was my fault that she didn't, still— If you could find her and she'd care for me, I'd come and doctor the poor beggars. I'd like to, but I can't."

I went back and told her. She went to him. Presently she sent for me. He was holding her hand. She was deadly pale.

"If I save a dozen lives," he said, "you're going to get me out of here; and I'm going away with her; and she's never going from me. She's sworn it. Haven't you, Lucy?"

She moistened her lips.

"Yes," she agreed. "Yes."

"Now," he demanded, "you swear it, too; not to me, because you might not feel bound by an oath to a madman. Swear it to her! You swear him, Lucy."

She rose and held out her hand. I took it.

"For the sake of the lives—most of all the young lives—that will be saved," she begged, "I ask you to pledge your honor, as a faithful promise to *me*, Dr. Hardy."

She looked me straight in the eyes. A doctor sees a deal of pain of mind and body, but such pain as that not often, thank God!

"I swear," I said. I bent low over her hand and kissed her fingers.

The madman stretched himself.

"Now for work," he said. "Show me the way to the wards."

He moved toward the door, a huge, unshorn man, with his coat turned inside out, and carrying in his hand a dummy lantern that he had carved from wood. We easily persuaded him to abandon the lantern—since his search was ended—but for a long time he refused to alter the coat. He had turned it so to air his wicked heart, he explained, and make it fresh and good.

"It is good now," his wife protested.

"No," he denied. "Not till you take me away, Lucy."

"If you do not turn your coat," I

objected, "she will never take you away. The patients will think you are mad, and you will kill more by fright than you will cure with medicine. You have to save a clear dozen, or you can't go."

This convinced him, and he turned his coat and brushed himself; and from that time he attended the patients just like an ordinary doctor. No, not an ordinary one. He was the ablest physician I have met. He said he was no surgeon—and anyhow I should not have let him operate—and he had a horror of administering anesthetics. Mrs. Adean did that for me, when I required assistance. Otherwise she worked with him. It was understood that she would call me in if she saw reason to doubt his treatment, but she did not do so for several days, during which she obviously avoided me. Then she came.

"He wants"—she said—I will not name the poison, nor detail the case. I fear that others might misapply the treatment. "It is for the little girl in E 6. She seems to be going. He thinks it is the only chance. Have you ever heard of such treatment?"

"Never," I told her. "It is the madness of a madman."

"I don't know," she said slowly. "He is very clever. Will you speak to him?"

I went to him at once.

"What are you thinking of?" I asked him; and he shrugged himself.

"It is giving her a chance," he asserted. "One out of ten only, I admit. This particular stage of fever neutralizes the poison to an extent. If it does so sufficiently, the stimulus may save her. If not, she dies anyhow. Look at her."

"Yes," I agreed. "Yes."

I gave him the poison. He knelt down and injected it. He stroked the child's hair first. He was fond of children.

He came to me in another ward half an hour later.

"One of the ten," he claimed. "She's come through."

That evening two more of his cases turned the corner, two whom I had regarded as hopeless.

"That makes three," he declared, with a smile. "A quarter of my freedom

earned. I shan't go even at the dozen, if you haven't got assistance and still need me. I'm safer here, in fact. Once I get outside, there's the drink; unless she can keep me off that. She can, if she'll care for me. That's the trouble. She never did really."

"I suppose she did when she married you," I remarked.

"No," he denied; "only fancied that she did. She admired me professionally, and mistook the feeling. When we were married— She considered me a bit of a brute. She wasn't far wrong, but if she'd loved me she could have made me what she pleased. I don't want you to blame her. There was an operation—I always funk'd them—I drank beforehand. She tried to keep me from it, and I struck her. She went to the child's parents and told them that I wasn't fit to do it. Then she left me, and I went queer in my head. I ran away from England to keep out of an asylum, but you got me out here. She's promised to try and like me now. If she does, I shall be all right."

"And she?" I asked. "And she?"

"She'll be all right if she can get to like me," he said. "That's why I've told you. Tell her it's her duty to. That's the master card with Lucy—duty." He laughed an insane laugh. "She thinks a lot of you. She'll do what you tell her."

I told her that her plan of taking him away was worse than folly; that it was a crime; that no one was bound by a promise to a madman under such circumstances.

"It was not a promise to him, my friend," she answered. "You pledged your honor to me. The crime will be on my head. I am his wife, and I must try to save him—the more because I do not love him."

"The promise was conditional," I reminded her. "I shall send him back to the asylum before he saves his dozen."

She looked at me, shook her head, touched my arm.

"Sometimes," she said gently, "our duty tries us very hard. I am not afraid that any trial will be too hard for you."

I bowed my head and left her. To

send him away would be murder, and I could not do it.

He had saved a dozen lives, he reckoned—two dozen—more. The epidemic was passing. My old head nurse, Miss Carruthers—she was Mrs. Neeves now—arrived with her husband. He was a doctor, and they had started to my aid as soon as they heard of my difficulties.

"Oh, Doctor!" Mrs. Neeves exclaimed. "You have grown old!" She cried a little, and a little more when I told her of our straits. "To think that you had no help at all!"

"I had the best help that ever a doctor had," I contradicted. "I will introduce you to my Right Hand Man!"

Carrie Neeves told me that evening that she had found that she had something to learn from Mrs. ADean.

"As a nurse," she said, "and as a woman. It is an awful case. I'd sooner see her catch the fever and die than go away with him. Mad or sane, he bears the mark of the brute."

I nodded.

"You have put in words what I have always felt," I said. "Except with children. He is good to them. They are all fond of him. It would be better if she died."

The next day she was down with fever, and likely enough to die. I thought of my words then; thought of them again, when Harmer came to me. He looked unusually insane. There was such a curious glimmer in his eyes.

"She told me that *I* was your right hand man now," he said. "She thinks so much of you. You needn't set anyone to watch me as she did. I knew she was watching me, of course. I swear by every oath that binds a man, mad or sane, that you can trust me. I swear it by *her*. Let me stay."

"You shall stay," I agreed.

He stayed; and did his doctoring better than ever. Neeves agreed with me that he had never seen his equal.

"I don't know if he can save his wife," he remarked. "*I* can't; and I doubt if *you* can, though you're much in advance of me, and have made a special study of this *Colonian* form of enteric."

"It isn't a normal form in her case,"

I warned him. "There's a kind of brain fever mixed with it. They don't usually rave in this connected way. Ask your wife to stay with her as much as she can. She wouldn't like the other nurses to hear so much of her back history."

"Carrie means to stay," he said. "It isn't only *back* history."

That was true. Mrs. Adean talked a deal of me. Well, she said "Lancelot," the knight whom she had always wanted. I knew whom she meant. So did the Neeveses. For that reason they kept her husband out as much as possible.

There came a time when we asked him to treat her. The case had long been beyond Neeves; and now it was beyond me.

"I give her a couple of hours, Harmer," I said, "unless you can do something. She is the best woman I have ever known."

"Yes," he said. "Yes." He stood watching her for a long time; asked questions about the symptoms without taking his eyes from her.

"The delirium is the point," he pronounced at last. "What is it about? I can't do anything unless I know. Are you a set of fools?" He turned on us fiercely. "She's dying principally from the trouble in her mind," he asserted. "It weakens her too much to resist a very ordinary fever. You ought to have seen that a week ago. I suppose the trouble is her dread of going away with me?"

"Yes," Mrs. Neeves said. "Do you wonder? You are a clever man in understanding people. Don't you understand your wife?"

He looked at Mrs. Neeves; laughed a curious laugh.

"I understand her just a little too well," he said. "Against her loathing for me she would set her love of doing her duty, but— There is someone else, I suppose? . . . Don't stare like that. . . . *It's you!*"

He put his hand on my shoulder; stared in my eyes; laughed again.

"Well," he said, "it doesn't much matter—now. Three days ago I might have saved her. Now I think she's too weak. The chance isn't one in twenty,

and you'll say that I've killed her." He glared at me.

"I think you mean to," I said; "but you can't. She will die anyhow. Perhaps it's best."

He pushed me back.

"That is not a doctor's business," he said roughly. "I am her doctor now. I have to save her life if I can; if I kill her afterward. Stand back!"

He knelt by the bed, listened to her heart, looked in her eyes. Then he took out a little hypodermic syringe.

"What is in it?" I asked sharply. He did not answer, but stared at her.

"It is no use trying to explain the treatment," he asserted. "You"—he looked at Neeves—"are just the ordinary medical charlatan. You"—he turned to me—"are just a superior charlatan. You know a little of one side of medicine. The other side is—human souls. This will either kill her or clear away the fever for a moment. I expect death; but, if she lives, she will be rational, will know you, will go on living, if she is strong enough to hold to something in life firmly. The only possible hold is *you*, Dr. Hardy. Well, tell her that I have died. Ask her to live for you. She must not see me till she is quite recovered. We can talk of that afterward."

"She had better die!" Mrs. Neeves cried.

"As a man, yes," he said. "As a doctor, no!"

He inserted the point of the little syringe in her neck.

"Your chance, Lucy," he muttered. Then he kissed her. Then he went. He laughed a horrible laugh as he closed the door.

"He has killed her!" Mrs. Neeves screamed.

I leaned over the bed and took Lucy's hands.

"No," I denied. "No."

She shuddered and struggled for a time. Then she opened her eyes, smiled at me.

"This is good-bye," she said. "You may kiss me now."

I kissed her.

"You must live," I told her, "Right Hand Man! Live for *me* now. He—it

was an accident with one of his poisons. Live for me. Oh, Lucy! Try, dear! Try!"

"She is gone!" Mrs. Neeves cried.

"No," I denied. "Only fainted."

A quarter of an hour later she roused sufficiently to smile at me. She turned her face against my hand. Then she passed into a natural sleep.

"We have saved her!" I said. My voice broke.

"God forgive you!" Mrs. Neeves cried passionately.

"My dear," I said, "as a man I agree with you; but I am a doctor."

I went out, walking unsteadily, and passed upstairs to Harmer's room. He was sitting in a chair, with his face to the window and his back to the door.

"She lives," I announced, and then I seemed to feel something in the room: the undefinable something which a doctor knows. I crossed the floor silently and swiftly and looked down at him. The little syringe lay at his feet on the floor. He had turned his coat and held his wooden lantern on his knees. He had gone to the far country looking for love to make a new man of him. I pray God that he found it.



LOVE'S FEET LINGER

By Berton Braley

"OH, let us go a-gipsying, a-gipsying, my own,
 Along the open highway, where all the winds have blown;
 We'll leave the crowded city, the sweat and fret of town,
 And on the road to Arcady we'll go a-dancing down.
 My arms shall be your shelter, your eyes shall be my light
 (A radiance more wonderful than stars which shine at night).
 Away from stony pavements, away from plots and schemes,
 We two will go a-gipsying adown the Road of Dreams!"

"I'd like to go a-gipsying, a-gipsying with you,
 But when I think it over I fear it wouldn't do.
 I'd get all tanned and freckled—you know my skin is fair—
 And how I'd look without a maid to help me do my hair!
 I'd love to go a-gipsying, a-gipsying, my dear,
 But I should never like the food the gipsies eat, I fear;
 And though, perhaps, by daytime, the sunshine may be gold,
 I'm very sure when evening came I'd catch my death of cold;
 And what with all my luggage, my gowns and lingerie,
 We'd make but little progress on the Road to Arcady!
 You be a gipsy, sweetheart, a gipsy nice and brown,
 And tell me all about it when you come back to town;
 For me to go were foolish—and most improper, too!
 So I won't go a-gipsying, a-gipsying with you!"



THE reason why so many marriages are unhappy, says an old philosopher, is that most girls are occupied in making nets instead of cages.

A WINDOW IN ACACIA VALE

By Stephen Phillips

BEHOLD yon window, like a tank
With some dark depth behind;
Whence oozy eyes at times emerge,
To peer upon mankind.

They stare on thee, but see thee not,
Who in that dark reside;
All dank and private through that depth,
With gaping mouth they glide.

That face, that floats now to the pane,
Retains not what it sees;
Kind God, who madest all creatures once,
Didst thou make even these?



OCCULT SUMMER

By Gordon Johnstone

SUMMER morn rudely torn
From the arms of shadows,
Were your dreams as sweet as these
Bell-empurpled meadows?

Summer sea sleepily
Whispering 'mong the pebbles,
Is your talk of wise gray seers
Or of love's young rebels?

Summer breath, summer death,
And a new creation;
What is autumn but your soul's
Red reincarnation?

UNMARRIED DAUGHTERS

By W. L. George

IT is hardly an exaggeration to say that there are now no national problems, in this sense that they are all of them international. Some trifles such as tariffs or constitutions affect but one country, but the true and big things of humanity are under discussion in every civilized land. Again, I do not think I exaggerate when I discern this international quality in what is known as the "Woman Problem." For an emancipating agitation is proceeding in every white community, and is even rearing its head in Turkey, China and Japan. Woman is discontented and woman is on the march.

Now it is a notable fact that whereas the leaders of the suffrage movement are mostly married women, the rank and file are mostly spinsters. That discovery is of social importance, for, among adult women, more are married than single; it would, then, appear to follow that spinsterhood and discontent are natural companions; it is perhaps truer to say that spinsterhood and injury are natural companions in a capitalist state.

Now, though America is not faced with exactly the same problem as England, because it contains an excess of males (some two and a half millions), its problem is not different—it is merely less intense. In England and Wales women exceed men in numbers by over a million; it follows automatically that all English women cannot marry, for the emigrants exceed the immigrants, and at any rate, immigration of men into England has never reached anything like the figure required to balance this excess of women.

The peculiarity of the case is that more boys are born than girls in the

British Isles. Yet it is evident that something radical is wanted if women there are to be made happy. I, personally, believe that marriage is the best state for a woman, and that an unhappy marriage is better for the individual than a so-called happy spinsterhood. But if we take into account that the men are not available, and that spinsters must compete with the widows, who are very popular in the marriage market, it is clear that some substitute for marriage must be found if women are to enter into the fullness of life—that fullness they do not know today, as you will all realize from the average pictures of the daughter in the home and the "old maid" in society.

The daughter in her father's house lives generally under an extreme regime; she is either pampered or sweated, and she is always tyrannized over. As a rule she receives no training for any occupation: if her parents are rich, she must content herself with games, the elementary arts and social life; if her parents are poor, she is expected to spare them, a servant, to devote her energy to keeping the home clean, and therewith to be satisfied; if she goes out to work, her parents generally appropriate the bulk of the fruits of her unskilled, inefficient labor.

She receives an education inferior to that of the boys because she is not supposed to earn her living, but is supposed to back herself to win in the race for the matrimonial stakes—in Great Britain the cautious bookmaker might lay two to one against her chances of a win. Her artistic capacity is not encouraged; her political views are smiled at; she is not allowed to be a human being, but only

a woman. If the unmarried daughter turns into an "old maid," her position is much worse: trained to run for the matrimonial stakes and left at the post, she disappears from the bookmaker's list; no longer eligible as a woman, and ineligible as a human being, her existence is tolerated by humanitarian opinion, which would be far more humane if it sent her to the lethal chamber at forty.

The lethal chamber or the freeing of woman, those are the alternatives. To confine woman to her sex role, and to let her live when she has failed to perform it, is nothing but cruelty. In America the bachelor woman is treated with a certain distinction, but in England the "old maid" is merely ridiculous, empty, flighty, untrained and unskilled. In both instances she is splendid material which has been wasted by man; it is therefore time that man should begin to understand her, to do her justice.

One of the causes of the trouble is that women have been cut off from men by the home, and by certain occupations. The home is the enemy of women; it exhausts their bodies, monopolizes their minds. Some simplification of living, such as the encouragement of coöperation in cooking, cleaning and the care of children, will certainly affect the problem, for it is evident that people cannot fall in love unless they meet, and that a large number of young men and women in every city seldom meet persons of the other sex. They are too hard-worked, and there is no social basis of acquaintance: the scullery stairs do not lead to the Garden of Eden.

It is true that the lot of girls has been improved by their entry into business, where they meet men, but the great mass of spinsters has been left untouched. Bred up as inferiors, they have become dependent, subservient, untruthful; in general, they have decayed morally; and no blame attaches to them as, having no rights and having desires, they have been compelled to use craft. Craft is the weapon of the slave, and it is foolish of man to complain that woman should use it, when he himself has placed her under the yoke. He, too,

has suffered, for all exercise of authority is bad—as bad for the master as it is for the servant; thus, while man has been keeping woman down, he has been inflating his own arrogance, nursing his own selfishness—briefly, keeping himself down.

I am not here concerned with man; what hurts me is the manner in which we have shut woman off from usefulness. A fact I quoted at the beginning of this article, that most of the leaders of the suffrage movement are married, bears profoundly on the question. *The married lead; the single follow.*

Still, as all cannot and need not lead, we must consider those who follow. Among the unmarried, the emotional wastage is tragic. Sacrificed to a warped ideal of respectability, they submit to the capitalist system, which prevents marriage because it institutes competition for fortune, and therefore makes a man chary of carrying a wife upon his back; many go to their graves unloving and unloved. They suffer emotionally, I know very well; indeed, nothing is so pathetic as these words said to me by an unloved woman:

"If I felt that a man loved me, even in China, or Australia, even if he never wrote, I should be happy."

Physically, too, they suffer: I cannot here discuss physiology, but it is evident to all of us that the married woman of forty is handsomer, healthier, happier than the spinster of forty; she has a better skin, a better figure; she is gayer; she can use life.

Two roads lie before us: the better is to find men; the other is to find work. Given that more boys than girls are born, the first step is to improve the survival of the boys. Boys are more difficult to rear than girls; they die within the first year. One of the primary cares of the Feminist movement should therefore be the reduction by hygiene, by the endowment of motherhood, by the reform of housing, by the minimum wage, of the sacrifice of young lives. If the mortality of boys between ages one day and one year could be brought down to the same figure as the mortality between ages nine and ten, the sexes would bal-

ance; but this is not enough, for girls are not unmarried only because they are superfluous. If we establish the minimum wage in all trades, the marriage rate will go up by leaps and bounds, and if by the destruction of capitalism we suppress unemployment, unfettered human desire will make spinsterhood the exception. Failing such radical measures, the capitalist state can offer women polygamy; the absurdity of this suggestion does not redound to the credit of the system.

It is suggested that women should emigrate into new countries; that is not a bad suggestion, but it will not solve the problem, for the fields of emigration are limited. Moreover, it is not right that women should be driven out of their country against their will. To the simplification of the home should be added a recognition that the daughter's labor must be paid for; that she is entitled to be trained in the domestic arts, or to receive such wages as will enable her to qualify for an independent occupation. It is interesting to observe that a trade union has just been formed in England, "The Homemakers' Union," with a view to gaining wages and limited hours for the home laborers.

The last minor remedy lies with girls themselves; it is for them to demand from their parents equal opportunities of education, to rebel systematically against parental control, to demand that they shall be recognized as social beings—for one always gains what one wants, if one asks for it loud enough and long enough.

All these methods increase the supply of men, or make man more accessible; but as we must face the fact that men are in the minority, it is clear that we must find for women another avenue, and that is work. If we define work as the particular occupation which satisfies each human soul, we become convinced that the whole basis of the militant suffrage movement is the demand for work. Enthralled for centuries, woman is trying to express herself, to find something to do in the world, and to be taken on her merits while she is doing it. What shall we do with her?

In spite of appearances, the militant

suffrage movement is a constructive, not a destructive policy. It is ridiculous to think that, because women are smashing windows and burning houses, they merely intend to overthrow the social order: what they intend to do is to rebuild it. Every important reform movement in the world, whether republican, socialistic or specialized, has been preceded by a period of destruction. As Nietzsche says, "To build a sanctuary, you must first destroy a sanctuary." Militancy is, to some extent, the outcome of the discontent of women who are exasperated by marriage, to a large extent of the discontent of women who have been debarred from marriage and demand a social function.

A great number of those who are demanding a vote do not know what they want to do with it, but many are conscious of the fact that a vote is not an end, but a means to an end; the vote is a banner. Once gained, it is to be used by the Feminist Party, who propose to embrigade women as a sex for the purpose of gaining sex rights. These sex rights for married women will consist largely in a proper share of the income of the household, and in the endowment of motherhood. For unmarried women, it will mean *the right to status*.

Feminists know that the vote will not raise wages, or open trades, or enable female painters to sell more pictures, but it will make of woman a creature conscious of political power, therefore, a creature more combative, more inclined to combine in trade unions, thus to raise wages and limit hours. By educating her politically, it will clarify her mind, and enable her to extend her position in the household and in the cosmos. She will then be taken on her merits, for it is quite certain that, though her merits be today not great, she is rated on a scale which is less than her due. Woman is untrained and unskilled, and, until she is trained and skilled, she will not be able to obtain by force from men that to which she is entitled by right. When militancy has achieved its aim, which is not at all distant, the wide field of the future will be open to the unmarried girl.

In my opinion, the effort of woman must be directed toward the functions which she now executes, but this time with a view to securing a monopoly: she has already captured nursing, the bulk of restaurant attendance, the major part of elementary teaching; these trades can be entirely captured by women. Joined in trade unions, when they are animated by the new political spirit, I shall not think it extraordinary if women demand that employers shall not employ men in these occupations. And they will win their battle, for we live under a democratic system where, in any community of one hundred, fifty-one always dominate forty-nine.

But this is not enough; this is merely something to do. If woman is to express herself, she must have work into which she can put her soul. That work is probably the crafts. I mean by crafts the applied arts, that is to say, the decorative part of manual labor, the beautifying of wood, glass, leather, metal, stuffs, etc. I see woman as the rival of the machine. She is more desirous of beauty than man, who is desirous of ease: it is to woman's share falls the organization of beauty in the home, the arranging of flowers, of table appurtenances, of ornaments. I wish to carry this further, to a time not at all remote, when organized women will run their own crafts schools and invade the realm where man and his machine, engines for cheapness and engines for speed, have imported ugliness.

Here, to my mind, is the great means of expression of the female soul. If woman cannot turn to matrimony, she can turn to the arts—the arts, which even Schopenhauer knew to dignify life so much as to make it bearable.

It may be said by a critic of this article that woman cannot express herself through the arts, but only through her sex. It would be sterile to reply with a long list of women painters, writers and musicians, for the mental position of women has so long been degraded that the critic would find a Roland for every Oliver of my list. In the arts woman is standing her trial, but I object to the jury and ask that the case may be set

back for twenty years; I am firmly confident that in twenty years we shall not be short of new evidence. I would say also that artistic expression is sex expression, that there is no art without passion, almost that the artist is one who has discovered that there is something better to do for a lover than to love.

But there is no reason why the sexual side of woman should not express itself through that which is nearest to her sex, *i.e.*, through the child. Though the applied arts will give to millions of unmarried women an outlet for their soul (and let none charge me with exaggeration because I say millions, but consider rather that *every* article of common use is decorated), there is no reason why woman should not extend her power over the child. Already she controls the *crèche* and kindergarten; one woman sits in the Chicago night court; women are attached to the children's court; a number sit on English boards of guardians and control the workhouses. That portion of woman's activity I wish to extend; I wish to give her sole control of the education, medical inspection, social protection of the child. I hope thereby to furnish spinsters with a substitute for motherhood, to make them the vicars of those mothers who are too hard-worked to do their duty.

Indeed, believing that education by the male is education in prejudice, unconsciously designed to maintain in the mind of the boy the belief that he is superior to the girl, to extol the value of strength, and to minimize the value of reason, I should not be averse to handing over the whole of education to women. In education, I stop short at the universities, for the beings who enter these are already formed. In the universities woman can safely take her chances with man: in open competition she may occupy the professorial chair; but this is not material, for we are concerned with the attitude of the human creature rather than with its intellect.

This question of attitude is the basis of my plea. I want together to give woman a more dignified status, and to give her the dignity with which she will carry it off.

If, on the lines I have indicated, we can make of the unmarried woman a useful creature instead of a wasted creature, the attitude of man will change; he will take her for granted, exclude the sex factor from his calculations. For instance, fifty years ago, the whole of the United States would have smiled if it had been suggested that women should be policemen. Yet, I understand policewomen have recently been appointed in California. That is what the feminists look upon as a true victory. They do not think that the police force should be handed over to women, but they do want to alter the attitude of man, to compel him to take it for granted that women can enter the police equally with men. Ours is a mental campaign, rather than a material campaign: we do want for all those daughters who cannot marry some satis-

fying occupation, short hours and good wages; but, above all, we want a mental revolution. We want man to show no favor to woman, no mercy, no generosity, but we want equality, justice—in brief, the suppression of the sex factor.

All this happens while I write. The great good will which is at the back of any reform, which urges it, stumbling and protesting toward its goal, is not as blind as the human eyes through which it looks. Steadfast but untiring, the good will which is in man, in the worst as in the best, is redressing ugliness, leveling the little barriers of caste, class, nation and religion. The signs can be read by all, for, as Zola said very well, "Truth is on the march, and nothing will arrest it." The time is not distant when truth and good will will level also the barrier of sex.



SOCIETY NOTES FROM ELYSIUM

By George W. Parker

BARON MUNCHAUSEN has been elected president of our new Psychical Research Society.

Eve, Helen of Troy and William Tell will be seen in a roaring little one-act comedy next week at the Iliad House, entitled, "Apples."

Plato, who recently undertook the study of the new income tax law, has been placed in a private sanitarium. We hope for his speedy recovery.

Salome is so rushed with pupils who wish to learn the tango and hesitation that she has found it necessary to beg the assistance of Juno and the Queen of Sheba.

Lucretia Borgia wishes us to announce that she will serve tea and wafers to her callers on Friday afternoons. Don't rush.

Ophelia has broken her engagement with Hamlet. She says he talks to himself too much to suit her.

Dan Chaucer is thinking of starting a literary magazine. He says the English language is in loose shape and needs a lot of tinkering. Dan's experience makes him the man for the job.



A MAN who jumps at conclusions seldom lands on his feet.

PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT

By Owen Hatteras

CHOOSING A WIFE BY HER PROFESSION

In the pre-feminist period, when wise old codgers sat in the gates and dropped matrimonial hints to the anxious young blades, they concerned themselves merely in dividing women into the only two classes the world had ever known—good ones and bad ones. And most of the warnings were old saws that rasped on minor faults. The young men were advised to slip around early before breakfast and see if the damsel was up and had her hair properly stacked and breakfast cooking, and to listen at back doors to hear whether she sassed her mother, quarreled with her father, snubbed her dear old aunt and was impudent to her deaf uncle.

In these piping times of progress, when small things have passed away and it takes a major effort to produce a minor impression, the only way to select a wife is by her profession. A few hints to youths who have not yet taken the count ought to be helpful—but won't.

A Beauty Doctor is to be strongly recommended. Both she and her complexion are self-supporting. You don't have to be trying to say things all the time to bring the color to her cheeks. And when you go back to the old settlement visiting, the neighbors and relatives won't be exclaiming under their breath: "My, how she has broken since she married him!"

A Woman Physician should by all means be avoided. She'll insist on sleeping porches in January, cold baths and diets.

A Suffragist should be chosen only after fasting and prayer. It is not the

exercise of the franchise that is deterring: a woman can vote every two years without disturbing the solar system; it is what happens between times that should give us pause. It is scarcely conceivable that a full-grown suffragist will take what is coming to her without a murmur and not return any of it with a whack. Every married man loves to fight; but it is the fighting back that makes him lonesome for the days that are no more. The suffragist is not favorably inclined to a female monopoly of the coal carrying, clothes rubbing, lawn mowing, churning, darning and doormat industries. Young man, beware of suffragists. But if one gets you, be good.

Novelist. The introspective man who has always had a yearning to tear himself wrong side out and see the cogs of the wheels clash should marry a woman novelist—she will do it for him with illustrations.

Actress. Ideal for the busy man who is exempt from income taxes.

Stenographer. Fine for a second wife.

Cook. Rather dangerous to possess anything so rare and valuable.

Milliner. Excellent if you are of sufficient importance not to have to deliver handboxes.

Society Girl. Not likely to worry over where you are at nights; but her costumes are.

School Teacher. Good for grammar, but bad for digestion.

Shopgirl. Too wise for comfort.

Woman Lawyer. "Settle your case out of court" is still good advice.

Female Politician. Very agreeable. An ordinary man cannot do better. There is no other woman with which his vote will count for so much.

THE FIFTH GEAR

By Dorothy H. Brodhead

DAYSON sauntered in through the entrance gate, and, passing the crowded grandstand, strolled across the wide, smooth, white track. The atmosphere about him was charged with the excitement of the coming race. Frantic, sizzling eagerness burst into little crackling explosions of enthusiasm along the line of automobiles ranged outside the fence; a subtle agitation was apparent in the gaily costumed, wandering groups of spectators, while the seething, turbulent stand fumed and fluttered with unrest. But Dayson imbibed none of the effervescent spirit. His attitude was a mild mixture of dejection and indifference.

Halfway across the track a voice halted him. "Hello, Dayson. Is it true that you're going to ride with Treadway on that new car?"

He turned, recognizing Roberts, the referee, and nodded in reply.

Roberts glanced up and down the course. Then, nonchalantly thrusting his hands into his pockets, he strolled over to Dayson's side.

"I hear this car has five gears," he said curiously. "Tell me about it. What is the idea of the fifth gear anyhow? Speed?"

Dayson nodded. Then he shook his head with a little movement of disapproval. "Oh, it's a shame that I don't know more about the thing," he said. "Will you believe it, Treadway and I have only been out twice with that machine, and then for short tryouts! We've never had the chance to get up a good burst of speed. Guess they came mighty near not finding anyone to drive it. They didn't approach me until Friday, and they'd engaged Treadway

only the day before. Even the fellow that built it hadn't the nerve to risk his neck, though he was anxious enough to get the car entered." He paused, squinting at the sun. "Who is Treadway, anyhow?" he questioned carelessly. "I never heard of him before."

"Don't know him myself. Never heard that name in any of the big races before. Is that he now?" Roberts nodded toward the entrance gate.

Dayson turned and looked in the direction indicated. "Yes," he said, and waited for the third man to come up.

Treadway was fully two inches shorter than Dayson, and his figure was lean and spare, in striking contrast to the mechanic's huge, well made form; but there was nerve and strength and energy in every alert movement.

Dayson greeted him amiably. "Meet Roberts, Treadway," he said pleasantly, and the men shook hands.

"You're running the new Mariat car, Dayson tells me," Roberts began interestedly.

Treadway nodded.

"Running against the Gurman and the Meridees," Roberts continued. "There are some other fast cars entered in this race, too."

Treadway nodded again. "I know it," he said thoughtfully, and there was a pucker of annoyance between his eyes. But then a wave of courage seemed to flow over him. "We've got a wonderful car, though, if we can only handle her," he confided cheerfully. "How about a trial spin before starting time, Dayson?"

They took leave of the referee and moved away together. Dayson still squinted, because the sun was in his eyes, and its light seemed a mockery when his

soul was so full of darkness. His big shoulders drooped. Trouble had never crossed his path before, therefore his twenty-three years of carefree happiness had left him still more than half a boy, and he had taken it boyishly, furiously to heart when Adele Meredith refused him for another man, a man who she admitted was "not quite so thrilling, not quite so fascinating as you, Harvey dear, but—you seem so young, so unreliable, so—so like a kid." And when Dayson had insisted firmly that she could make him into a man, she had shaken her head with its coronet of honey-colored braids, and told him that that would be all right, if she hadn't found a man already made. And so she had slipped out of his life, and Dayson, seriously, abashedly, felt the world turned into bleak emptiness when she was gone.

He forgot Treadway, in the sweet torture of his thoughts, until they were passing an eager knot of track enthusiasts, discussing the coming races. One voice rose emphatically above the rest. "That Mariat is certainly a beauty as far as design goes. But, just the same, the Mariat isn't the car that's going to win today—and there's a reason." The speaker lowered his voice, with appropriate solemnity, and Dayson strained his ears to listen. "The makers claim that if that car is opened up on the fifth gear she can travel faster than any car made. Well, maybe she can—but she won't have the chance. If what the makers claim is true, then the driver that speeds that car on fifth gear must expect to drive faster than any car has ever driven on a circular course, and he doesn't know that it would be possible for her even to hold the track on the curves, going at that rate of speed. Well, Treadway, the driver, is new at the game, and unfamiliar with the car, and probably his life seems as much to him as any man's. He'll never have the nerve to do it—and he can't win unless he does."

Dayson, turning sharply to his companion, saw that the words had stung a dash of red into Treadway's tanned cheeks. But they walked silently to where the trim, perfectly proportioned

racer stood amid a little group of admirers.

Treadway walked around the car and, almost lovingly, his slim, capable hands examined the steering gear and the brakes. Dayson threw aside his coat, and together they passed from part to part, assuring themselves that every minute detail was in condition for the coming strain. They bent together over the engine, and Treadway leaned toward his big mechanic. His voice was low and tense.

"I've known, Dayson, from the minute I agreed to drive this car, that I'd have to have my nerve with me," he said. "I haven't stopped to consider what you might think of me or my ability—but you have reason to be mightily interested. Naturally, I'll do my best—I'll be careful to the smallest detail; and I've driven cars all my life. Nevertheless, all the dangers of motor racing are open to us. That man we heard back there enjoyed hearing himself talk, but, just the same, the things he mentioned must be considered. It is only fair to tell you beforehand that I've got to win this race, if the Mariat can do it; and, to do it, I intend to speed as much as possible—on the fifth gear."

Dayson nodded. He reached out and put his big hand into Treadway's responsive fingers. "That's all right; I'm with you," he said.

They finished going over the car in silence. Treadway climbed into the driver's seat, and Dayson, after cranking the sleek, gray thing into life, swung into the seat beside him. Instantly they began to move, and, picking up speed, slid out into the smooth course with the sharp, dust-choked wind beating in their faces.

Dayson listened to the steady breathing of the engine. The car seemed to live and fairly leap at the track curving before them. They passed car after car, mere laboring blurs on the white, winding way. Then Treadway touched the subject uppermost in both their minds. "I daren't do it," he said. "Not until the track is cleared for the race."

After that, nothing more passed between them. Dayson found himself

listening untiringly to the voice of the whirring engine, but when they had come to a breathless stop, and found themselves placed for the race, he knew that the car's mysterious speed remained still untried.

He stirred. The air about him was dust-laden and he felt dazed from the recent speed. The hushed, expectant silence of the two miles of spectators seemed very far away and unreal. He turned and looked at Treadway in the seat beside him. Treadway was as alert and alive as ever, impatient for the starting signal. There followed delay and wrangling and voices, then silence, and suddenly the referee's banner flashed before their eyes. On the second, Treadway let in the clutch and they were off, with the Gurman three yards ahead to the right and the Meridees sputtering close behind to the left.

In the first realization of their sudden speed, Dayson glanced sidewise. Treadway was leaning forward; his lean shoulders moved in unison with each movement of the wheel. On the curves, Dayson threw his own great bulk regularly against the movement of the car to hold to the track. And thus they tore their way, mile after mile, through the blinding, dust-choked light.

For several breathless seconds the Gurman continued to lead them, while the Meridees thundered close behind. Then Treadway threw the lever into fifth gear, and, in the accompanying second's delay, the Gurman gained a yard and the Meridees passed them.

It was just at this point that the course stretched away very level and very smooth before it took the curve. Dayson was perfectly certain that this was the place where Treadway would begin to test his speed. Therefore he was not surprised when Treadway threw wide open the throttle, but involuntarily he held his breath. The gray car shuddered, plunged and suddenly swept race-maddened after her competitors. The long white ribbon of the course shot under them faster and faster, and the line of spectators turned into a long blur on the track ahead; the two leading cars, almost indistinguishable, seemed

to draw steadily nearer. Then there was a curve, and with it a breath-taking side plunge, which left only one car on the course ahead. Dayson tried to draw in a full breath of the racing air, and he found time to be grateful that they had taken the curve in safety. And suddenly, while he was thinking, the other car slipped behind them and they were racing over an undisputed way. A roar filled his ears and he realized that they were again passing the grandstand. It seemed hours later that they whirled past a squirming mass in the ditch, and he knew that it was an overturned car, but, at that speed, he could not distinguish which one it was.

The first fear of the new, terrible speed had passed away. He was becoming accustomed to the merciless rush of air as they were hurled through it. And just at that moment of relief and exhilaration, the rear tire blew out with a sudden, pistol-like explosion. The pit was fifty yards ahead. They crawled to it, and the Gurman passed them before they reached it.

Dayson swung to the ground, but Treadway was there before him, furiously unscrewing a nut with a wrench he had snatched from a mechanic, working with the frenzy of a madman before the car was completely jacked up. To Dayson, the race was as good as lost, as several cars passed them, but he fell to work eagerly. Quick, capable hands helped to remove the wheel and replace another with a fresh tire, and suddenly Dayson noticed that the Gurman, too, had come to a stop, a quarter of a mile ahead. He called Treadway's attention to it, and Treadway's face lighted with sudden hope at the chance its mishap offered them. After that they worked more furiously than ever. But just before their work was complete, the Gurman's driver and mechanic swung into their seats and the car raced away. Thirty seconds later, the Mariat was tearing after it, Treadway grim, determined, Dayson inert, exhausted, thrilled at the sheer persistence of the driver at his side.

The delay had given the other cars a half-mile's advantage, but the Mariat

was scarcely off before Treadway had it into fifth gear. Then there were miles of breathless, blinding flight, but to Dayson's straining eyes, each perilous curve found one car after another left behind and the Gurman a little nearer than on the curve before. On and on, past the grandstand repeatedly, endlessly whirling between the blurred line of watchers, nearer, ever nearer the flying car ahead.

Dayson began to imbibe Treadway's spirit. He watched and hoped frantically until, after miles of their reckless speeding, they passed the Gurman, which clung to them like a drowning soul.

Then, in the first moment of relief, after they had shaken their clinging rival free, Treadway leaned over and spoke between his set teeth. "My God, she's weakening!" he shouted. Dayson caught just the one word, and focused all his senses upon the action of the thundering engine. Slowly he became conscious of the change that had occurred—the massive rushing force of the car seemed to have lost its power. Treadway groaned. His hand sought the gear shift. There was again that second's delay, and they were racing forward—but less swiftly. Treadway had been forced back to fourth gear.

Dayson looked at his companion and found his face stern and set. The courage he saw there inspired him with daring. "Shall I try to get at the engine?" he shouted into his companion's ear. "Or will you stop?"

Treadway shook his head. He said something but the sound of it was swallowed up in the roar of the rushing wind. "Can't stop"—sharp, emphatic—pierced the clamor and caught the boy's ear.

Dayson steadied himself, and, clinging desperately to any support that reached his hand, climbed out on the swaying framework, and wormed his way forward. Inch by inch he crawled, while the car lurched and rocked and tore its path along, veering perilously at every turn, where he could not now throw his weight to the task of keeping it steady. At last he managed to grip with a shak-

ing left hand the support that held the light canvas mudguard and, slowly, warily, steadying himself each second, to raise the hood with his right. The engine lay naked before his eyes, writhing, quivering, bellowing, and all his senses were concentrated to grasp the cause of its torture. Then he discovered it.

"Bearing dry," he screamed back to Treadway—the racing wind seemed to snatch the words from his mouth and tear away with them into space.

Still clinging to the mudguard brace, he felt slowly for the little oilcan which he knew he had thrust into his pocket, and, as he did so, they took a curve and, simultaneously, a gust of wind struck stingingly against his face. Instantly there was a rending, tearing confusion, and his hand nearly lost its weak hold as the hood, in the grasp of that rushing wind, wrenched free and was borne noisily, madly away.

For a second, the significance of what had happened stunned his mind. It was in that second that something roared ominously beside them and lingeringly passed them on the course. He recognized the Gurman, and a wave of hopelessness went over all his senses. But the vanished hood had left exposed another rod to which he could cling. He finally found the oilcan and slowly, perilously, brought it into touch with the bearing.

He realized that Treadway was shouting from behind. He could not catch a word, but realized the sense of it. "Can you stick there and keep her wet?" he was asking.

As Dayson turned his ear to catch the words, his eyes again fell upon the Gurman, just beginning the long last round which meant victory. Suddenly he became furious at the winning car. He turned toward Treadway eagerly. "Let her go," he yelled. "Put her back in fifth gear." He gripped the oilcan in his mouth for a moment and held up his hand with five fingers extended to indicate his meaning.

Treadway obeyed. Dayson felt the furious new struggle of the writhing engine above which he clung; space rushed past them, shrieking. The car

careened, pitched and ate up the long, shining track in steady, breathless gulps.

Dayson wondered if the car could possibly hold the track—at what minute they would be dashed into oblivion. And, like a drowning man, he thought of the past with panoramic precision. He thought of Adele and of the smarting pain that had sent him into the race, careless of its results. And, shivering in the cold rush of racing air, he wondered, also, how she could ever have influenced him to such a degree. After all, Adele was only a girl, and the world held thousands of others; it held golf clubs and good fellows and a future, and probably success. If he lived to the finish of this race, he would come out of it with his eyes opened to the truth. It was strange how a little fear could kill a man's love—or had he never loved, after all?

His hand continued to minister to the hot, dry bearing, but his eyes, horrified, took swift glances at the racing scenes. The car plunged and tipped and a hideous fear seized him. He had been a daredevil! He had been a fool!

He looked at Treadway, when he dared shift his eyes. Treadway's life was in practically the same jeopardy as his, but Treadway's features were fearless, immovable, and his hands, on the steering wheel, were perfectly steady, perfectly controlled. Dayson tried to catch his own flying courage, tried to imbibe some of this other man's superb nerve. He felt like a coward but, nevertheless, blubbing tears of terror ran down his cheeks.

But he clung doggedly on and applied the oil. He was ashamed to show weakness in the face of his driver's inexhaustible courage, but winning the race held no place now in his shattered ambitions. His one thought was of the end—and safety.

He glanced ahead and the finishing lap stretched away before his moist eyes, with the Gurman taking the curve just before them. They were traveling now like a meteor. Dayson watched the Gurman take the curve and instantly realized that they were taking the same

curve—on two wheels. For a fraction of a second the two cars seemed to hang together, side by side. Then, slowly, the Mariat drew ahead, with the other car clinging close. Then Dayson knew that their plucky little car was clear of her rival, racing, careening over that last shining lap. A second later the referee's banner flashed before his eyes, but this time it was the banner of the victor.

The crash of the frenzied grandstand filled his ears, and out of the blurred nothingness they rolled smoothly into a sunshiny stretch where the long blur turned into a line of faces. He drew a long breath and jumped to the ground. His quaking knees would hardly support him. He saw Treadway's hand extended across the steering wheel to him.

Treadway's eyes and lips were smiling. "You were a good sport," he said frankly. "Thanks for sticking to me. I appreciate it—heaps. You see, I had to win this race—just had to. It meant money—money enough to carry out my plans and pledges and promises—and I owed it to someone to carry them out."

Dayson glanced at his companion wonderingly. He was frankly surprised at this touch of human sentiment revealed in a man, who, throughout his varying conditions, had appeared to be made of iron and stone.

But Treadway went on quietly. "My wife," he said slowly, "deserves all the things I meant to give her when I married her. But, you see, I found that I couldn't make up to her all the things that she gave up by marrying me. She never complained any. You'd like my wife, Dayson; she's a dead game little sport. But one night I found she'd been crying. That settled things for me. The next day I agreed to race this car, and I'd have driven like the hammers of hell to win. This money'll give me the chance to arrange things for her, put her among her old associates and the things she loves best. Thanks for the way you stuck to me. Dayson, you've been fine."

Impulsively, Dayson had once more reached out and grasped the other man's hand. Their clasp was almost bone-breaking.

Then, quite unexpectedly, out of the sunshine and the masses, a pair of long-fringed blue eyes looked into Dayson's own, and a radiant, upturned girl face, framed in honey-colored hair and a hat that matched her eyes, flashed before his unbelieving gaze.

Adele looked at him, and one warm, muscular, little hand slid into his own. "You were wonderful," she said softly, "wonderful." Then, suddenly, she seemed to catch sight of something beyond him and she wrenched free and was gone.

He turned, bewildered, to look after her, and a flush climbed into the very roots of his hair. For an arm, in a sweater sleeve, lay around her supple shoulders, and a lean brown hand patted reassuringly the blue sleeve of her gown, and Dayson saw that it was Treadway's hand that caressed her, as it was Treadway's face that smiled confidently into her own.

Something rose thickly into his throat, and it was as though a mist were cleared away from his sight. He felt, with a sense of shame, that unconsciously he had been tested and had fallen short. The race, the courage-testing speed, had strained their characters like a sieve, and the other man had retained something big and solid and worth while to bring back to her, and he had not. The other man deserved her!

He stood watching them together. In the turmoil of his thoughts, the girl's words of a few months past rang clearly across his mind: "That would be all right if I hadn't found a man already made."

"You knew—you sized us both up and knew," he muttered, and laughed disconsolately to himself, as he turned away through the crowd. "By Jove, she was right, though," he went on telling himself, honestly. "I wasn't big enough for a girl like that."



THE HOUR OF LIFE

By Elsa Barker

BELOVED, I am thrilled with the desire
 Of life this day. We two shall lie long dead.
 The dust of ages will assoil each head,
 And all our sins be burned in the last fire.
 Today we live, and we are hourly nigher
 The time when we shall live not. Is the dread
 Of the imaginary sword so red
 That our love's warriors tremble and retire?

All that we owe to others we must pay,
 Somewhere, some time. We would not cheat gray Fate,
 But we may pay her bills or soon or late—
 Aye, we, adepts, may choose our reckoning day.
 See how the spring sun glitters on the sea!
 Put on thy singing robes and sail with me!



MUSICAL NOTE—Long hair does not necessarily make the maestro, nor long ears the critic.

MADELYN'S FIND

By Edward Goodman

“**T**HEN look carefully over every name in the telephone book.”

Madelyn pouted but proceeded diligently to the task. It *was* a task, for Madelyn was only ten. But then the need for it was imperative. Her mother had come to this place, where she had never been before, to spend the whole summer, just because some friend had happened to recommend it. To be sure it was a pleasant enough spot. The grass, instead of being clipped short and yellow during the summer, was allowed to grow high and dusty, so that you could almost hide behind it by kneeling, and you were quite invisible when you lay among it flat upon your stomach and clean white dress. It was an ideal ground for hide-and-seek and wood fairies. Then, too, way behind the old house stood an arbor where grapes were going to grow later, and where now raspberries peeped at you tantalizingly, and tasted so sweet when caught that you forgot to hesitate about the little weeny bugs in them. And best of all, not very far across the road, was the beach, a wonderful place for running the fascinating danger of poking at sand crabs. And beyond was the ocean, stretching, as Madelyn had never before seen it—oh, forever and ever.

Strange black ships crept across it now and then. “Tramp ships” her mother called them. Now tramps on a long, narrow country road are frightful. But tramps way out there are ever so much more dreadful, yet delicious. You can look and look, and not be afraid. And you know what “sea tramps” *really* are! What the books call pirates! Oh, yes, there was no limit to the stretching of

that sea. It seemed to stretch to nowhere—pretty near all the way, I guess, to Europe! Indeed, on foggy days, you can see vaguely the dim outlines of the European shore. But what’s the use of tall grass and raspberries and crabs and pirates and Spain—if you haven’t somebody to enjoy them with you?

Of course there were plenty of other people in the boarding house—but they were grown-ups. There was Evelyn, but Evelyn was twelve and had friends of her own. And Madelyn didn’t know anybody here. She simply had to find a friend. That is why she took her mother’s advice, and with grave energy and silent enthusiasm went successively through pages of Adamses and Blakes and Cutlers and so on down.

Perhaps she skipped a few. Maybe she did get a little tired toward the end. But she certainly did arrive finally at Zedder. And then there was nothing left but the advertisements. Moreover, she hadn’t found a friend. Now there was nothing else left to do but to tell mother of the failure of even this scheme.

At the door leading to the porch she rather hesitated. Mother was rocking and laughing queerly, and Mr. Fellows was leaning so far over to her, with his arms on his knees, that his rocker stood still. Mr. Fellows had told Madelyn that *every* little girl thought her mother the most beautiful woman in the world, but then Mr. Fellows was horrid: *her* mother certainly *was* beautiful. Madelyn looked in the glass every morning at her short yellow curls that always got tangled all over her head, and wondered if they would ever grow to that long, lovely silkiness of her mother’s. People often told her that her blue eyes and

pert nose were just like her mother's—but she never could find out what they meant by "pert." The dictionary said, "disrespectfully forward," but that of course was all nonsense, because her mother was a grown-up, so whom could she be disrespectful to? Besides, the loveliest part of her mother's face was her mouth, which looked like two raspberries held together when Madelyn picked them. And Madelyn had been called "saucer mouth" often enough by the boy next door, when he got mad with her, to know that of course she didn't really look like her mother and could never be as beautiful as she.

If Mr. Fellows didn't think her mother beautiful, why was he always with her when Madelyn wanted to have a private chat? It wouldn't have been so bad not having a friend if Mr. Fellows wasn't always around mother. Mr. Fellows! Did you ever hear such a funny name? He was the sort of man that pinched your cheek till it hurt and then laughed and called you a little rogue. And if he talked to you he'd always put on a serious face but be laughing at you all the time behind. He thought he was smart. Once he had asked Madelyn a dreadful question. She hadn't told her mother about it yet, but you just bet she was going to some night when she was being tucked in bed.

And here was Mr. Fellows with mother again. Madelyn hesitated about interrupting, because she knew that constant interruption was very rude.

"Are you never going to take another chance?" Mr. Fellows was saying. "Are you going to condemn all mankind because of one?"

Madelyn's mother laughed queerly again.

"I don't condemn them," she said. "I love them—all—from a distance."

"But you keep so far away you can't see," Mr. Fellows said, and moved closer to her.

Madelyn's mother stopped rocking and spoke like the crackle of dead leaves. Madelyn knew what that tone meant, though she couldn't make out in the least what all these words were about.

"Perhaps I have seen all I care to,

Mr. Fellows. You don't want to make me rude and force me to close my eyes?"

Neither of them spoke after that, and Madelyn thought it a good time to approach them. For, after all, she *had* to find a friend, and the telephone book hadn't helped her. So she stepped boldly up to them and said, "I've looked at every name, mother, and I couldn't find one single one I know."

Mr. Fellows snapped back in his chair just as if he were on a spring.

"Oh, why don't you go on the beach and make a friend—silly?" he asked her. He smiled as he said "silly," and he said it in the voice with which one says "dear." But Madelyn knew perfectly well that he *meant* "silly." She hated him.

"Yes, that would be a good idea," said her mother. "Come, Madelyn dear, we two will go right away."

Madelyn had, of course, no objections, but Mr. Fellows had. He said she could make friends much quicker alone. Fortunately, however, her mother didn't seem to think so, at least that afternoon, and so the two of them went to the beach together.

Madelyn felt now that she couldn't wait till bedtime to tell her mother about that horrid question. This seemed the right moment to speak of it, and she straightway decided to do it.

"Do you know, mother," she said, "Mr. Fellows asked me how I'd like to have him for a father! I wouldn't like it at all—not at all, you know. I hate him. Oh, mother, do *you* like him?" Madelyn couldn't keep painful anxiety from her voice nor a little wet from her eyes as she spoke.

Her mother just knelt down and gave her one of those delightful hugs about the neck, and kisses—one just on the forehead, and then a delicious cool one on the mouth. And she wiped her eyes, too.

"Don't you worry, dear. He was only teasing you, you silly!" The way her mother said it, Madelyn didn't mind at all being called "silly." She smiled happily, though she wasn't entirely reassured.

But she didn't find a friend that afternoon. She and her mother had a long, serious talk instead—about her father who was dead and had been very good—and about how miserable one could become from getting angry too quickly and refusing to forgive. There were many things in such talks as these that Madelyn didn't quite understand. She never knew exactly how her father had died, for instance, and whether he and her mother had quarreled before he died. But her mother was always a little sad and very loving when they had these talks. And Madelyn enjoyed them. She forgot entirely that day about her search for a friend.

The next day, however, she started on it in earnest—and alone. Her mother was reading, and looking a little grave, over some old letters, and said she thought Madelyn would, after all, be more likely to succeed if she went by herself.

And Madelyn did succeed. She met a perfectly dandy little girl. In the first place, her name was Madelyn, too—only she spelt it differently. Madelyn thought at first this might be awkward, but the other girl didn't seem to mind a bit. She said she'd just as soon be called Madge—that she had been called that a good deal anyway since her mother died. Her mother had always called her Madeleine, but her father—it was her stepfather—said he didn't like that name. So he called her Madge. Madge didn't care; she rather preferred the name—it was shorter. She liked everything easy. She seemed almost more like a boy, anyway, than a girl. Her black hair was cut short like a boy's—"to make it grow" and "to keep it from being a nuisance"—rather contradictory reasons, Madelyn thought. Her skin, too, was brown just like a boy's. She made mud pies and didn't mind getting herself all dirty and her shoes all wet. And she wore—not a dress—but a jumper—a regular boy's jumper!

You may imagine that all this shocked Madelyn at first. Then she was so sorry because Madge had no mother and only a cruel stepfather. But Madge wasn't sorry at all. She didn't seem to

remember her mother very clearly—she had died two years ago. And she said her father was a dear, dear, dear old dear. This shocked Madelyn even more. Conceive a stepfather an old dear! She thought of Mr. Fellows. It seemed preposterous. But Madge grew indignant in her protestation. So Madelyn succumbed—as she finally succumbed to mud pies and the jumper and the dirt and everything—even the boy's hair. Before the end of the afternoon Madelyn's hands were sticky, her shoes soaking and her dress plastered with muddy sand—but she had made a "best friend," and she was happy.

After her mother had cleaned her for supper and been told all of the family history of Madge, she had seemed disturbed and asked Madge's last name. Madelyn had forgotten to ask.

"I suppose it's all right," said her mother very irrelevantly, "but be sure to find out tomorrow."

And Madelyn certainly meant to. Only, tomorrow being foggy, she had to introduce Madge to the coast of Spain, where those pirates went, and to the raspberries. And they had to play wood fairies in the grass. Also Madge showed her how to shinny up a pole of the arbor, which she accomplished with a tear in her skirt but otherwise successfully. And again Madelyn forgot to ask.

And the third day Madelyn met Madge's stepfather.

"He isn't a bit like a stepfather," she explained to her mother. "He's big and tall and brown. And he has great round eyes and a soft big mustache and a smile that makes you feel like telling him things right away. And oh, mother, I think he has a saucer mouth, too, only it doesn't seem ugly. He took my hand right away like an old friend, said Madge had told him about me, and asked me my last name—" Madelyn paused, confused. She was reminded that in some unaccountable way she had again forgotten to ask Madge's.

But her mother seemed to have forgotten also. In fact, her mother grew somewhat pale, and asked her with a little gasp what the man had said when she answered.

"He just looked at me a while quietly, and then he said he had heard the name before. 'Madelyn Muir,' he said. 'So that's your name!' And then—then he took me in his arms and kissed me—hard. . . . Where are you going, mother?"

"Just out in the air," her mother answered, without stopping "It's hot here."

Madelyn didn't think so. She was afraid her mother might be getting ill. And as she had no one else to confide in, she told her fear next day to Mr. Bertan, Madge's father.

Two days after that something exciting happened.

Madge had been playing with Madelyn in the arbor. Mr. Bertan came to call for her—by the back way. But after a little the three of them walked up slowly toward the house.

And there on the porch they saw Madelyn's mother walking quickly to the railing, her face very white, and followed by Mr. Fellows, his face very red.

"How dared you? How dared you?" her mother was saying.

"Why, Anna," Mr. Fellows said, and then came face to face with Mr. Bertan.

Madelyn's mother saw him then, too, and whispered, "Dick, oh, Dick!" very quickly, and then grew very red.

"I think, perhaps, you had better retire," Mr. Bertan said to Mr. Fellows, in a voice which was very quiet but which nevertheless made Madelyn afraid.

Madelyn couldn't hear what Mr. Fellows answered, but she saw him leave.

Then her mother said "Thank you" to Mr. Bertan, turned round and went at once to her room. She didn't come down to supper that night. She said she had a headache.

"How did you know Mr. Bertan's first name, mother?" Madelyn asked.

"I didn't. I don't," her mother told her. "I said 'Dick' because I was nervous. Don't bother me now, dear. I want to rest."

"I'm sure mother's sick," Madelyn told Mr. Bertan the following morning.

"Take her this prescription," he answered, and handed her an envelope.

So he was a doctor, this fine man! Of course Madelyn had to see if she could read a prescription. And she found she could.

It said:

DEAR ANNA:

I have forgotten. And our kiddies are great friends. Must one never forgive—even to the point of evading pests and playing with one's children on the beach?

Try as she would, Madelyn couldn't make this out. It certainly wasn't a prescription, though he had said it was. And how did he come to call her mother by her first name? Her mother wouldn't explain. She wouldn't even read the thing. She threw it across the room.

But the next day her mother took her to the beach, and while she and Madge were playing, her mother and Mr. Bertan talked together all the afternoon. Madelyn tried to listen, but she couldn't hear anything but a mumble—they spoke so low, and looked so embarrassed, like Madelyn when she went into the parlor at home.

After that her mother went often with Madelyn to the sea and met Mr. Bertan there with Madge. And after a while Mr. Bertan and her mother talked just like good friends, and laughed together—which they had never done before. Her mother was quite well now and Madelyn was having a splendid time.

But one day her mother spoiled all Madelyn's fun by herself asking her that dreadful question:

"How would you like to have a father, dear?"

"Oh, mother!" Madelyn gulped back tears. "I hate Mr. Fellows. I thought you said—"

"Not Mr. Fellows, silly," her mother said, rather sharply.

She was sorting over some old letters tied with faded ribbons, and smiling as she reread them. But Madelyn did not understand.

Nor did she understand when Mr. Fellows, a day or so later, said to her:

"I was a fool to send you to the beach to find a friend."

* THROUGH "HELL" TO PEACE

A GREAT SENSATIONAL STORY OF THE PRESENT WAR

By Donn Byrne

It is war news which now appeals to the public. Mars, not Venus, is in the ascendant. Much war "news" is pure fiction: this story, therefore, conceived, planned and written in twenty-four hours, and surcharged with those dynamic forces which are ringing through the world today, voices the incalculable heights and depths of human evolution in the grip of selfless, patriotic contagion.

FROM the window on the seventh floor McCarthy could see the faces of the crowd on Broadway staring upward like an immense white patch on a background of dark blue. It occurred to him that they looked like pieces of confetti or like snowflakes on a hard road. It had struck him as curious when he first looked down that there was no drone of conversation, and then again he understood that talking would not fit in with the grim, drawn faces of the mob. They were too tense for speech.

And then suddenly there came a sharp crackling of questions and answers and quick, pithy comment. A fresh war bulletin had been flashed at Park Row and the crowd were sending it along. As it passed the huge granite building of the gigantic oil corporation, it sounded like the rattle of musketry, and then it faded into a rustle as it went down Bowling Green.

Occasionally there would come a sort of billow that passed down the street from the impetus of newcomers on the edge of the crowd. They would sway with a movement that suggested grass bending before the wind, and then the khaki-clad, grim-eyed provost guards, with rifle butt or the quick lurch of shoulders, would push them back from the sidewalk.

There was the sharp ringing challenge of a sentry, and an aide slipped past and into the boardroom where the

War Council was sitting. As the door opened and shut, McCarthy caught a flashing glimpse of the figures at the huge glass-topped table. Against the dark background of the room he could see the President, his ascetic, scholarly features standing out like a cameo. There was the gaunt, wasted profile of the great oil king, and the cool eyes and the full mustache of the younger Morgan. He could catch a glimpse of the fighting jowl of Brisbane, sitting hunched up and punching a pad of paper viciously with his pencil, and he could see the broad shoulders of the explorer ex-President. Then, like a film on the screen of a cinematograph, the faces of Debs and of the great Ironmaster and of Gompers flashed and vanished.

The council had been eighteen hours in session now. McCarthy could hardly believe it possible. Yesterday he had the fine scorn of the soldier for the civilian's physical endurance. And here were these men, none of them under fifty years of age, working through a night and the best part of a day, turning over plan after plan in their heads, exhausting nervous and mental strength without stint, with no indication of ending the session, and he, a colonel of the aviation corps and a staff officer, was feeling weak at the knees and tired in the shoulders from patrolling the corridor. He couldn't understand it.

And the crowd outside, they seemed not to have changed in the night, either.

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Surely he had seen that panama hat with its violently gay band against the window of the steamship office yesterday evening. And there could be no mistaking the flaring red shawl on the dumpy figure of that little Italian woman. It had been there yesterday also.

Three weeks ago the crowd outside had been going about their business, day in, day out, every week in the year. They had been buying and selling, and digging mains and building skyscrapers, and figuring at desks. They had been tangoing in cabarets and lounging in theaters and sitting breathless in movie houses while the machine clicked out miles upon miles of romance and adventure. There was no buying or selling now: few could buy and fewer would sell. The mains were cluttered with deserted shovels; the unfinished buildings looked with shameful reproach from the sidewalks; the hands that handled the pen were now fumbling with the breechlocks of Winchester rifles, and the snap of a corporal's or a sergeant's voice commanded a promptness that the boss could never buy.

Three weeks ago they had been buying newspapers, exchanging opinions on the war, explaining why one country should act in such a manner and another country in this way; why Italy would be false to the Triple Alliance, and under what circumstances Japan would join hands with England. Now they were wondering when the first shell would crash into the Woolworth Building or flying squadrons of Uhlans clatter over Brooklyn Bridge.

Three weeks ago the Kaiser had been a truculent figure whose precipitate greed and arrogance had plunged Europe into devastation. He was about to get his lesson. Germany, the men in the street agreed, was to be wiped off the map of Europe as if blotted out by a sponge. So much would be shared up between Russia, France and England. There would be Alsace for France, of course, and German Poland for Russia, and England's empire would be safe for all time.

Then the student Kruminoff had settled the Kaiser's Napoleonic ambitions

with two pounds avoirdupois of nitroglycerin, and Germany had gone berserker. The French brigades now were reeling back, as a boxer reels from an uppercut. A million Cossacks were racing for the refuge of Moscow. And the remains of the British armada were feeling their way clumsily toward the Portsmouth slips.

And the crowds in the streets of Manhattan were waiting tensely for the decision of the eight gray-headed men whom they trusted to protect them from the bite of the twelve-inch guns and the sword bayonets of Prussian infantry.

II

FORTY-THREE years of peace the Germans had had. Forty-three years when the world saw in them trafficking, shrewd people whose eyes were only on victories to be gained in commerce in the China Seas and in the busy marts of the Argentine and in the bazaars of Calcutta. They talked war, they strutted and boasted; but the world looked at that as it would look on the idiosyncrasy of a colonel of the National Guard who took a burning interest in parades and reviews but whose real importance was derived from his humming factories.

And they pitied Germany when the Belgians had hurled her advanced guard from Liege, and they pitied her when the British fleet had taken heavy toll of her high seas armada and sent her scattered ships flying to cover to the Dutch coast.

The pity had changed to wide-eyed amazement when later she snuffed out Belgium as two fingers snuff out a candle, and when the treacherous floating mines and the hidden mortar pits of Bremen and the sinister ghostly Zeppelins had smashed the British dreadnoughts into junk and waste lumber.

Forty-three years of peace, forsooth! Forty-three busy years in the armories of Essen, where the furnaces roared night and day. Forty-three busy years in the secret hangars of Silesia, where silent gray-eyed airmen planned an empire of the clouds.

McCarthy had been in New York

when the first crushing defeat of the French had taken place. He had come down from Washington to a review of a National Guard regiment, feeling very bitter that one of the coveted "observer" posts with the French columns had not been tendered him. He felt that if anyone should have gone, it was the most prominent military aviator in America, and the most prominent military aviator in America was himself.

As he came out of his hotel the morning after the review, he noticed that there were not so many groups discussing the war news as there had been the day before; the advance of the French column toward Berlin was no longer a surprise. It seemed to be taken for granted that within the week the German capital would be in their hands. The Russian investment of Breslau was a dull affair, a matter of sitting and waiting and of doggedly shelling a stubborn fortress. The sinking of a few German cruisers by the British fleet served to enliven matters a little, but the public wanted big battles and were dissatisfied at not getting them.

Then boys could be heard yelling in the distance, and the Avenue seemed to stiffen like a pointing dog.

McCarthy listened intently.

A newsboy dashed up. Sweat was pouring into his eyes.

"Kaiser assassinated!" he yelled. His voice was hoarse from shouting.

McCarthy seized a paper and gave him a coin. Well, that was the end of Germany! He could easily imagine what would happen. The German armies in the field would be paralyzed with the shock. There would be total disorganization, panic and rout. Fortresses would capitulate at the mere sight of hostile artillery. There would assuredly be peace within a few weeks.

But he felt a savage resentment against the wild-eyed Russian student who had committed the crime. Arrogant blusterer though the Kaiser had been, he was a soldier to the finger tips, and a man! McCarthy read with shame-faced satisfaction how the mob had fought with the police for the murderer, and had torn him from them and had

dragged him to the nearest lamppost and had hanged what was left of him with a carter's belt.

McCarthy noticed an old German standing against the door post of a modiste's shop. His hands shook convulsively, and he was looking at the paper with wide, unbelieving eyes.

"*Ach, du lieber Himmel!*" he was saying. "*Ach, du lieber Himmel!*" A big glistening tear ran from his eye to his jawbone and dropped off.

McCarthy turned and hurried on. He felt as if he had intruded on something unspeakably sacred.

The baize door of the council room opened and an adjutant flitted into the hall. The door was kept open a minute. Someone was speaking. McCarthy recognized the full booming voice of Gompers.

"I'll answer for every man jack of them," he was shouting. "Your militia cut them down in Colorado, and God knows they've no liking for the sight of a uniform; but at the present, and at any time like the present, they'll march alongside the devil himself, if the devil was fighting for this country. And what's more—"

The door shut with a dull thud.

McCarthy remembered again that night, when everyone expected the German column to be fleeing before an invading French brigade and was impatient at the lateness of the news. He was dining at a little French restaurant on Sixth Avenue. The headwaiter, a grizzled old veteran of the Algerian campaigns, went about smiling and passing one hand gently over the other. Occasionally he would leave the room to ask if the news had come.

McCarthy was rather amused at him. He had been whistling the "*Marseillaise*" while taking the aviator's order. This manner toward the other waiters was that of a sergeant-major to a batch of recruits.

McCarthy was finishing his coffee leisurely when he caught sight of him near the door. The trim erectness had gone from his back, and he held on to a chair to steady himself. His eyes had gone dull and his face was gray. Where

his mouth had been firm and straight, there was now a sagging gape.

They had caught the French column near Düsseldorf, the news said. They had caught them as a spider catches a fly. What remained of the column was flying toward the frontier, disorganized, routed, panic-stricken, harassed by pursuing Uhlans and flanked by keen-eyed snipers, who picked off the staggering infantrymen as coolly and carefully as a sportsman picks off quail.

They had been swinging forward gaily, the little red *piou-pious*, flushed with victory. There was nothing but Elberfeld and Magdeburg between them and Berlin. "*A Berlin! A Berlin!*" they shouted, in the intervals of singing the "*Marseillaise*." True, there were trenches in front, one air scout had reported. The other air scout had not come back. He was lying, a limp heap in a mass of twisted stanchions, while a brown-faced German sharpshooter fondled his heavy Mauser and slipped a new clip into the magazine.

They had seen trenches before, only a week ago, when their firing line had scattered the Prussian infantry like rabbits. And there were the First and Second cuirassiers with them, the match of the world's picked cavalry, and the flower of the field artillery.

And then suddenly from behind the trenches shrapnel and lyddite had come screaming. And from behind a clump of trees two Zeppelins, like two gigantic gray slugs, had risen, raining nitroglycerin. And on their flank came squadrons of plunging, cursing, charging dragoons. They had held their hands in well, until the brown-faced singing Frenchmen had walked into the trap.

There was no chance of rallying them. Death came in front, from above and on the flank. It pattered on the shields of the machine guns and cut the horses from beneath the cuirassiers and mowed down the infantry like corn before a reaper. The column that had set out from the frontier to avenge Fashoda became a staggering, bleeding thing that wanted only to get away from the screaming shrapnel and the charging dragoons.

The mob in the street seemed to swish and eddy. There was a loud drone of conversation. A woman screamed in a shrill tremolo. The provost guards hurled the crowd back from the sidewalk with their rifle barrels and fists. An adjutant raced up the corridor with an envelope.

"Hello, there, Harrison, what's this?" McCarthy asked.

"Germans thirty hours out. Sailing straight for New York," he gasped, and dashed into the boardroom.

A knot in the mob seemed to be struggling. A man with a lean brown face shot his fists into the air. McCarthy could hear him yelling.

"Why the hell don't they say something, do something? Tell us what they're doing, for God's sake!"

A squad of guards dashed into the crowd. They dragged him out and up toward City Hall. A sort of shudder seemed to pass over the mob. The conversation died away in a dull hum.

McCarthy remembered how later in the week the English fleet had gone down over the mines of Bremen. He remembered the appalling silence around the newspaper bulletin boards as the crowd read of disaster after disaster, hardly believing it possible and not daring to disbelieve. The short staccato sentences in the papers told how the English admiral, lured into apparent security, had advanced into the harbor, believing that the fire of his gigantic fourteen-inch guns had smashed all defenses.

And then, like a conjurer's trick, the harbor had become a bubbling cauldron of spuming water and black mud and red flame and twisted steel and charred timber and mangled bodies. The crowd had gone white and shaking, and all they could think of was half-forgotten prayers.

The old Kaiser was gone, the old war dog of Europe, but now there was a new dog, a dog mad with rabies.

The Crown Prince had spoken to the world.

"I will make Europe a shambles," he had said to the frenzied burghers of Berlin. "We will show them whether

they can coop us up like rats in a cage. By God, we will!"

And then had come word of the firing of the Silesian forests, of terrified Cossacks scourging their mounts back to the walls of Warsaw; of the massacre of the Viborg regiment and the Siberian rifles, caught between the walls of flame and the batteries of Breslau. And then the swift night attack of mammoth dirigibles on the English and French Mediterranean fleets, and the red explosions and the little pieces of wood and the floating bodies that told the Spanish fisherman of the disaster!

It was all something that might have happened in a nightmare. It seemed to have no place in this world.

McCarthy remembered with a shudder the wild-eyed evangelist who had mounted the Franklin statue on the day of the Mediterranean disaster and preached the end of the world.

"Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars," he had quoted. "Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom—all these are the beginning of sorrows."

The mob had shrunk back from him as from a blow.

They had experienced a vague terror of what was happening in Europe, and felt as if they were some way connected with it, as one feels about a tragedy in a neighbor's house and cannot disassociate oneself from the responsibility of it. They felt surprised that they could ever have attached any importance to the death of the marines at Tampico, in the face of the European struggle.

What had they to do with it, they had asked, if all the countries in the world outside of America were tearing at each other's throats? Their only thought was the safety of the Americans abroad, and these were just then embarking on American transports, accompanied by American cruisers. What was it to them if the new Kaiser thought himself a second Attila? It was of as little consequence as a mad dog at large in the next town.

But let them keep their fighting to themselves—those war-mad European peoples who seemed bent on destruction.

III

MCCARTHY noticed the chief of staff slip out of the boardroom and go down the corridor. He returned a moment later with a group of National Guardsmen of the Naval Battalion. McCarthy recognized them all. There was Lorillard and Whitney and Strait and Waterbury; Tobin, Scott, Pike, Harris and Martin from San Francisco; Armour of Chicago, Newberry, Joy, McLaughlan and Denby of Detroit; and Higginson and Hale of Boston. The chief of staff looked strained and tense. He held the door open for them to pass through. McCarthy wondered what was going on behind the door.

The mob outside was silent again. A dull apathy seemed to have come upon them. It was as if they had given up all hope of word from the council room and were prepared to take whatever was in store for them.

The crowds were very different now from the shrieking maniacs who ten days before had to be clubbed again and again from the door of the German consulate by the provost guards. McCarthy remembered how the German bottoms had slipped from their piers into the river the night the sinking of the transport was reported. A half-hour's delay and they would have been masses of junk from stem to stern.

He was at one of the advance guards of the season's plays that night. Something seemed to grip the audience suddenly, and just as suddenly the players seemed to falter in their lines. A sort of intuition that something terrible had happened filtered from row to row of plush seats. Men and women looked at each other, some afraid to ask the question, others afraid to answer.

The leading lady turned from the audience to the leading man with ghastly, frightened eyes.

"You should have told me . . ." he said. He walked from a mantelpiece to a table. She missed the cue.

"You should have told me . . ." he began again. And then he, too, stopped, and stood looking from her to the audience.

The manager, a portly, sententious little fellow, walked from the wings to the footlights. He was to give out war bulletins between the scenes.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began. "A dispatch—"

He shook all over. A sort of catch came into his voice, and it broke in a high falsetto. He began again.

"Ladies and gentlemen, a dispatch of the Associated Press from London states that the transport *Logan*, carrying the American tourists back to America, was fired on and sunk by German warships this morning. The cruiser *Minneapolis*, which accompanied her, was also sunk."

The audience seemed paralyzed.

"The transport and cruiser carried eight thousand tourists," he continued. "They went down off the Irish coast; there was no provocation."

They turned to each other with frightened faces. Good God! The thing was impossible! Things like that didn't happen.

The manager was talking on.

"... Impossible to continue performance . . . Actors unmanned by news . . . Please excuse . . ."

McCarthy rose and went out. Others were sitting still in their seats. Some were making their way to the door, on tiptoe as in a church. Others were already outside. Some had forgotten their hats and cloaks, and stood bare-headed and bare-shouldered on the sidewalk.

The streets were filled with people speaking in every tone from a whisper to an enraged shout. Here and there policemen moved, ordering, pushing, threatening with their night sticks. The crowd seemed to seethe with passion.

He fought his way to Times Square. Yes, there it was on the newspaper bulletin, the same account that the little theater manager had read.

Somebody plucked him by the sleeve. It was a little gray-haired woman with gold-rimmed spectacles. She was in evening dress with a wrap around her shoulders.

"I can't see," she said. "Would you mind reading it to me?"

McCarthy read the bulletin.

"My son and his bride were on the transport," she said. "Oh, my God!"

She blinked behind the glasses.

"His name was Harold, and he was only twenty-five. He was on his honeymoon trip. Oh, my God!"

McCarthy wanted to say something.

"It mayn't be true, you know," he suggested. "News gets all bunged up in war time. Wait until it's confirmed."

"It *is* true," she snapped back; "I know it. I know it's true. I was going to meet him and his bride. I never even saw her. Oh, my God!"

Someone behind started up the "Marseillaise." The crowd took up the lilt savagely. McCarthy saw that the little woman's lips were moving. He bent down to catch the words.

"They'll pay for this," she was repeating to herself. "They'll pay for this."

She moved as if to go, and then turned around again. She looked at McCarthy.

"Oh, they'll pay for this," she said solemnly. Then the crowd swallowed her.

The morning brought confirmation of this sinking of the transport. It also brought news of the sinking of the *New York* and the *Massachusetts* and the crippling of the *Texas* by aeroplane attacks off the Newfoundland coast.

What in heaven's name, they asked one another, had happened? Had the United States committed some unintentional act of war? Or were the Germans seizing this opportunity to possess themselves of the Panama Canal? Or had the America's sympathy for England roused the anger of the Germans? Or was it simply that Germany had gone battle mad? Or was she dreaming of subjugating at one swoop the whole of the Western world?

Nothing could excuse the sinking of the transport. That was the most heinous crime possible to commit. The empire must suddenly have run amuck.

The morning after little red placards at every street corner told the readers that street fighting, rioting and resisting the police was punishable by death. War and martial law had been declared. The

first step had been taken to avenge the little woman of Times Square.

They looked at the red cards stupidly. They couldn't understand. The nightmare had become horribly jumbled up, which was much more natural for a nightmare than to follow any consecutive line of action. Men assured themselves that in a few moments they would wake up, grab a hasty meal, catch the usual train to their offices and spend the day adding up figures or selling insurance or putting over big deals.

Then three kaleidoscopic days, with half the American fleet bottled up in Mexican waters and the rest inaccessible and worthless on the Pacific Coast; the huge German flotilla approaching the coast, reinforced with armed merchantmen and French and English prizes; the hurried conference of war chiefs at Washington, and later, the conference of the council at the huge corporation building on lower Broadway. Why this last conference, McCarthy asked himself. What had men like the Oil King and the Ironmaster and the Socialist leader and the Labor Head to do with war?

Then he remembered an observation dropped by a New York Senator when he and his comrades had bawled lustily for action in Mexico.

"It will be very hard to get this country into any kind of a war," the Senator had said. "If the United States ever goes to war again, it will be the last war in the world. Do you think it's worth while wasting that on Mexico?"

IV

THE council room door opened and the National Guardsmen came out. Their heads were held high; there was a grim look in their eyes, and their jaws were set hard. The chief of staff looked after them with folded arms as they swung down toward the elevators.

An aide touched McCarthy on the arm.

"Wanted inside, Colonel," he said.

They had arrived at some decision, thank God! If they could only get

action, it would quiet things. Surely, even certain defeat was better than this waiting like a mouse cowering in a corner and waiting for the blow of a cat.

The baize door opened and McCarthy and the aide passed in. The gloom of the half-lighted boardroom gave the figures around the table a weird, ghostly appearance. Behind the thin face of the President the chief of staff loomed up like a gigantic statue. Debs was on his feet speaking. Fatigue and tension had worn his voice down to a hoarse whisper.

"If this must be, it must be," he was saying. "For years I have dreamed of nothing but peace, and now it comes hard to me to think of this horror. And harder to consent to it."

McCarthy noticed the features of the Ironmaster working convulsively; his fingers picked nervously at the edge of the table.

"We, in our generation," Debs continued, "have worked unceasingly and sincerely for peace. Men at the board here today have given their fortunes to peace propaganda. Others have preached and written and pleaded.

"And yet we, in our generation, have seen more war and havoc than the people of any other time. Some of us remember when the Prussians battered at the gates of Paris. We have seen the Boer War. We have seen the war with Spain. We have seen the Italians invade Tripoli. We have seen the Balkan states at the throat of Turkey. We have seen Mexico divided bloodily against itself. And now today—

"Sermons, writings, money have accomplished nothing. If we are to do this horrible thing, let us do it. If there is no other way out, let us take this way. And may God forgive us all if we are doing wrong!"

He sat down. The others were silent.

Then McCarthy saw the stocky broad shoulders of the fighting ex-President rise slowly. He turned to Debs.

"I know it's hard," he said; "I know it's hard. I can't even yet grasp the bigness of it. I don't think I even dare to."

He drew himself up and went on. There came into his voice the old fight-

ing ring, the ring McCarthy had heard three years before in Chicago.

"A century ago these United States planted a firm and a lasting democracy. Half a century ago this nation abolished slavery. Tonight it will abolish war."

McCarthy sensed a sort of thrill go around the table. He felt himself as if he were present at a moulding of the plan of Creation.

"And it's not the eight men around this board who are to thank for it. I know what you've all done. I know the sacrifices you have made. I recognize the obligations we are under to this great corporation for the gift of the oilships. That is not what makes it possible. It is the spirit of the country and the spirit of the young men who are giving themselves for this appalling sacrifice.

"Some of you broke down when you were saying 'good-bye' and 'Godspeed' to them. Some of you were for throwing it up. But I say no. The deed they are doing tonight is its own reward. The lives that are to be laid down tonight are in exchange for tens of millions that would be immolated from year to year and from century to century. They are given to prevent the ruin of people and the devastation of kingdoms. And I say they are given well.

"And I, for one, say Godspeed and good luck to them again. And I, for one, envy them what they are doing, and the blessings that will be showered on them, and the green memory of them for all time.

"We pass through trouble to great good. Do you think that ever again we shall stand against each other? Do you think the bond that unites now will ever be broken? You said, 'God forgive us!' Debs, you ought rather thank Him, for the things you worked for and prayed for and prophesied are coming true in your own time."

The President turned and spoke to the chief of staff.

The chief straightened up to six foot two of blue uniform and gold braid.

"Colonel McCarthy," he called.

McCarthy slipped forward and saluted.

"You will take hydro-aeroplane Number 5, and leave the harbor within six hours. You will fly due east until you overtake the fleet sailing in that direction."

"All right, sir."

"The fleet will meet and engage the German fleet sailing toward the Atlantic Coast. You will report the action minutely. Under no circumstances will you yourself engage. You are to be an observer and return immediately the action is finished. That's all."

V

McCarthy saluted and went out. Thank heaven, there was going to be some action at last. But why the mystery? Why this talk about a "horrible thing"? Debs' dread of war might explain his solemnity, but, somehow, there was an air of stern purpose and vague terror about the War Council that gave him a feeling of dissatisfaction. What was in the air? What did they want an observer for?

The last war! That was what Debs had said, and the others had seemed to agree silently. Why, there was his trade gone! And he began to think pathetically of a world where there would be no regiments marching bravely under colors, or troops resplendent in blue or trim and workmanlike in khaki, or freckled bugler boys calling *reveillé* or taps, or batteries dashing up with a clatter and rumble.

The last war! There would be no more use for him or his kind. What, he wondered, would become of him? He would miss the clink of the saber at his thigh and the comforting weight of the automatic in his holster; and then suddenly he pulled himself up and tried to remember if new brushes had been fitted to the motor of Number 5.

He passed out of the building and up Broadway. The crowd seemed to have sensed that something had happened. They chattered to themselves shrilly, and swarmed and eddied like water in a boiling pot. Once McCarthy saw a burly Irishman turn and smash an

Italian between the eyes. Then the lines of provost guards blotted them out.

A man dashed through the guards and caught him by the sleeve.

"For God's sake, what's going to happen, sir?" he shrieked.

"I don't know," McCarthy answered. He wished he could have told him something, because of the terror in his eyes.

He fought his way to Park Row and got a paper. Good! The Foreign Legion and the Turcos and Spahis had landed at Marseilles. Heavens, what havoc there would be when those reckless, death-despising devils came to grips with the Prussian infantry! And then he remembered the fleet of Zeppelins. Of what use were daredevil recklessness and fighting ability against the death that dropped from the clouds? What a pity! What a pity!

The German column that had invaded England was being held in check outside Leeds. Carson and his Ulstermen were fighting in trenches side by side with the Connaught Rangers. How long would they be able to hold out? Not very long under the withering fire of shrapnel that was cutting them to pieces every second. He wished he knew definitely what the plans of the War Council were.

He would know very soon. The fleet could not get more than a hundred miles' start on him. He could catch up with it in two hours. The German fleet was hardly more than one hundred and fifty miles off. There would be an engagement within six hours, he was certain.

But what was the "horrible thing" of which Debs had spoken, and the shadow of which seemed to lurk in the council room like the shadow of death? He felt a shiver at the base of his neck as he questioned himself about it.

As he walked up Broadway he noticed a trolley car standing where it had been deserted by passengers and crew. Shops were closed on both sides of the street. A group of children were playing about a bootblack's stand at Astor Place. The bootblack was probably in the excited, shivering mob that would not go away from the Battery,

waiting for it knew not what to sail up the bay. At any rate, there was no business for him now, McCarthy thought to himself with a smile, so he could well spare the time.

At Thirty-third Street he turned across to the Pennsylvania Station. The Seventh, Seventy-first and Sixty-ninth regiments were entraining. He noticed Vanderbilt and young Astor talking to the old brigadier general. The brigade, he knew, was to be split among different ports where troops might be landed from German transports. He remembered how startled he and the rest of the staff had been when Haywood and O'Brien and "Wild Joe" Carroll had offered to recruit a regiment of volunteers, and how glad it had made them that everyone should have been so eager to help out when the situation became serious. He remembered with a catch in the throat the man who had jumped into the East River when the recruiting sergeant at Park Row had turned him away as too old, and the boy he had met in Nassau Street who was crying because he was too young!

He looked at his watch. It was six o'clock. In an hour he would have to be off.

He turned and went down Broadway again. A stream of people were coming up. They were arguing heatedly, in spite of the tired droop of their shoulders and the harassed look in their eyes. Probably, McCarthy thought, the President had spoken from the window, asking them to have patience and assuring them that everything would be all right. He could gather that they had as little idea as he had of what was about to take place.

He got to the Battery and through the cordon of guards. He saw in the distance Svenson, his Swedish pilot, testing the stanchions of the hydro-aeroplane.

The mob stood outside the line of provost guards and devoured the machine with hungry eyes. For the first time since the sinking of the *Logan* McCarthy felt irritated at them. Why the devil should they stand there and look at him as if he were an exhibit at

a country fair? He felt so horribly foolish.

The pilot came over to him.

"Everything all right, sir," he reported.

"Very well," McCarthy snapped. "Get in."

They clambered to their seats and adjusted their masks. The mob and the guards continued to stare at them silently and intently as if they were about to perform some conjurer's trick.

The propeller began turning with a heavy swish. Then it changed to a hum, then to a roar like that of a furnace. The machine ran forward for fifty yards and rose in a little leap.

VI

It was dark now. A hundred feet up and he seemed to dive into an ocean of black. Below him the lights of the city blazed out like a mass of small stars. Directly to the left of him stood a white obelisk that was the Metropolitan Building, and further up a searchlight stabbed aimlessly into masses of clouds. Across the river a ferryboat ambled in a sphere of white flame.

He pressed his torch and made out the course by the compass. Yes, they could make it easily in two hours. The hydro-aeroplane mounted to a thousand feet and began moving eastward. The wind cut into his face like a dash of cold water.

He noticed on his right the thin silver thread of a new moon, and beside it a star that changed as he looked at it from green to blue and from blue to violet, and back to green again. He had never flown at night before, and wondered if the new moon really gave enough light for an aeroplane to be discovered.

The swing of the machine was making him drowsy. He wondered if he could sleep. He uncovered his ear flaps and put his mutes in. The roar of the motor died into a distant hum.

Then, it seemed the next moment, someone was hammering at his ribs. He opened his eyes drowsily and remem-

bered with a sort of shock. The pilot was pointing below.

"Fleet," he was shouting — "the fleet's underneath."

McCarthy looked down.

The fleet was picking its way eastward in echelon. The feeble light of the new moon showed up the dreadnaughts and cruisers like gray blotches on a surface of black. McCarthy could see the six flattened battleships in wedge form leading. Then came the cruisers and torpedo boats and destroyers lined up like the squads of a company, and behind them he could see the vague, gigantic forms of what appeared to be eight liners. There were no lights showing. From the funnels of some of the boats red sparks flashed now and again, and occasionally there were microscopic blue points on the wireless poles.

He could recognize some of the ships. Surely the point of the wedge was the *Florida*, and to the right and left of her were the *Oregon* and the *Montana*. There were the *Newark* and the *Richmond* and the *Chicago* among the cruisers. But the liners—what were the liners doing?

Ah, that explained the rush across the continent of the Western troops, and the depletion of the garrison towns. The liners were being used as transports. Gad, he thought, that was a nervy thing to do, to plan an invasion! Or perhaps they would land them at Hull or Grimsby to support the tottering English territorials.

The pilot touched him again.

"Look ahead," he shouted.

There was a little cluster of lights against the horizon. There seemed to be about a dozen of them. As the aeroplane forged onward they came nearer and grew more distinct. The pilot let the aeroplane drop five hundred feet.

They were nearly over the lights now, and McCarthy put up his glasses. There seemed to be three tubby little tramp boats lurching from side to side and wallowing as each wave lifted them.

"More on each side," the pilot shouted.

"Turn to the left, and we'll follow the line up."

They passed another a half-mile further on and then another, until there were fifteen of them in all. They turned and went back along the line. There were as many to the right. In all, McCarthy counted twenty-nine of them, stretching in a six-mile semicircle whose ends were pointed eastward. Only the three in the middle carried lights. The rest of them ploughed ahead laboriously under cover of darkness.

What were they doing there? McCarthy was puzzled. There came to his nostrils the unmistakable odor of kerosene. They might be oilships, but what were they doing in that peculiar formation? And why so many of them?

The pilot put a hand suddenly over the compass lights.

There was a sound somewhere like the whir of a distant lathe. Then it grew louder and became a drone. Then, in a minute, McCarthy recognized it for the noise of a biplane.

"Take the water," he ordered.

The machine dropped a hundred feet, steadied itself and dropped again. It was as if they were bumping from one ledge of rock to another.

"Careful now," McCarthy whispered, and they struck the water with a splash.

The biplane was within a mile now. McCarthy wondered if it belonged to the fleet behind him.

Suddenly a shaft of light stabbed downward and played about the central oilship. The black lines of the boat flashed out, and McCarthy could see that the decks were stripped but carried neither boats nor guns. The searchlight played on the bridge for a moment, and he saw with a shock that the officers on the bridge were in the uniform of the National Guard.

There was a sound behind him like the strokes of a giant hammer. It came nearer and nearer.

"Sounds like a torpedo destroyer," he said to the pilot.

A beam of light struck upward from behind. It played about for a moment and then caught the biplane. McCarthy could see an officer and his pilot huddled up in their gray Jaeger hoods.

There was a sharp metallic crack.

The biplane's searchlight shut off, and they could see it begin to ascend in a spiral. The destroyer's beam hung on to it like the grip of a hand. There were two more reports and the biplane keeled over like a wounded bird.

Light seemed to strike McCarthy between the eyes and behind him.

"Orders, sir! Orders!" the pilot shouted.

A score of searchlights were suddenly turned on from the eastward. The sea and the oilships stood out startlingly black against the white flare. Then a shell screamed past out of nowhere.

"South with her!" McCarthy shouted. "Fly low!"

As they turned he heard the crash of the big naval gun, and then another, and a third. It had all happened so suddenly he was dazed with it.

The wind cut through the stanchions with a shrill, high-pitched whistle. And again over the roar of the motor he could hear the thunder of a twelve-inch gun.

They were well past the last beam of the searchlights now. In a moment he would turn around and see what was happening.

"Mount. Turn," he ordered.

The aeroplane rose and came slowly around.

There were a dozen searchlights flickering around and crossing each other and twisting and mounting and falling again. Four of them, he knew, came from the fleet he had just passed. The others came from the east, and stabbed through the lines of the oilships at the American dreadnaughts behind.

VII

THE biplane rose steadily and flew eastward. As they rose, McCarthy could distinguish the outline of the attacking fleet. There seemed to be dozens and dozens of them.

He could count at least nine men of war and a dozen cruisers and a horde of destroyers and torpedo boats. And as he looked the men of war seemed to

swirl around slowly. The semicircle of oilships ploughed sluggishly forward.

What were the oilships doing there, he asked himself again, and was irritated that he could get no satisfactory explanation. If they were intended as a screen for the American vessels, what protection did they offer? The German fleet could break through them as easily as an equestrienne through a paper hoop.

He looked back toward the American fleet. Only the six battleships remained in line. The transports and most of the cruisers had changed their course and were cutting southward. From the bows of the battleships searchlights streamed like jets of water.

"Germans going to broadside, sir," the pilot yelled.

McCarthy turned around.

"God help those oilships!" he muttered.

Suddenly the sides of the German battleships seemed to light up in red pinpoints from bow to stern. McCarthy thought grotesquely that it looked like a scene in a romantic musical comedy. Then the crash of the fire struck the aeroplane like a buffet, and shook wings and frame and stanchions and blotted out the roar of the motor and the whistling of the wind.

He looked backward. A huge blot of red flame was licking upward from the deck of one of the American dreadnaughts. Another drifted near it with its smokestacks gone.

But, good God, what was happening? The four other dreadnaughts were circling around. The cruisers were swirling in an eddy of foam. Were they running away? Was the admiral mad? What did it mean, the whole insane performance? And why were those oilships still smashing ahead? They were nearly on to the German battleships now.

Something caught McCarthy's ear.

"Throttle the motor and volplane," he directed.

There was a steady whirl somewhere as of an electric fan, and another as of another fan farther off.

"Listen a moment," he said to the pilot.

"Sounds like Zeppelins," he muttered. "It *is* Zeppelins. Gad, I wish I could see! I wish I could see."

The whirring became louder. McCarthy couldn't make out in what direction it was. Sometimes it seemed to come from above, and then from below, and sometimes it seemed as if it were directly alongside. A sort of panic seized them.

"Damn it, why isn't it a full moon?" McCarthy raged. "Why isn't it a full moon?"

The air about them became full of sound. They could now hear the throbbing of biplanes. There seemed to be a sound as of many electric fans, and other sounds like the rattle of countless sewing machines, and still other sounds as of the engines of a million motorcycles.

"There it is!" the pilot yelled.

A searchlight had shot out directly below them. To the right of them, directly in the arc of the light, a Zeppelin stood outlined. McCarthy could see the crew through the rigging. Two of them, he noticed, were leaning over the rail and holding something.

Very faintly, through the rattle of the motor, he could distinguish the rapid, stabbing report of a quick-firer.

"For God's sake, look!" the pilot shrieked.

The aeroplane gave a quick lurch sideways, and then righted itself with an effort.

"Mind your wheel, you fool," McCarthy snapped. "And mind nothing else."

There was a blaze of yellow light and a short crack as of near thunder. The Zeppelin was plunging downward in a splash of yellow flame. The fleets were picked out for a moment in vivid chiaroscuro, and McCarthy could see the American transports racing southward and the dreadnaughts dashing onward to catch up with them. Below him the German fleet was plunging on to the oilships.

For a moment he saw the other Zeppelin, and against its gray hulk the black batlike outline of a monoplane. He looked at it stupidly.

"My God, he's going to ram it!" he muttered.

He rose and gripped the stanchions. He felt he wanted to race over and stop it somehow. It had been done before, and though it looked all right in cold print, here, and before his eyes, the act seemed incredible, impossible.

The Zeppelin tilted forward and plunged; the black speck of the monoplane seemed to stick in its side. A searchlight followed it down. McCarthy turned away his eyes before it struck the water.

He felt horrified somehow. It was as if Providence had permitted something that should never have happened.

What would the German fleet do now? Would they pursue the fleeing American battleships, or would they hold on to their course as before? And then suddenly he began coughing. Something seemed to press heavily on his chest, and acid, biting fumes choked him. The smell of oil grew more pronounced.

VIII

BELOW him he could distinguish vaguely the formation of the German fleet and the line of oilships. The little lumbering vessels seemed to have sunk very low in the water and to have closed in very near to the German fleet. And as he looked, the sea all around the battleships seemed extraordinarily calm. It was as if there were a wide circular island in the middle of the ocean on which the German men of war and the little oilboats rested, while outside the waves swelled and rolled and chopped at the edges.

"Say, what do you make of that down there?" he asked the pilot.

The pilot was coughing and spluttering.

"What's wrong with you?" he asked again.

Then again the racking in throat and lung attacked him. His eyes began to smart under his mask.

"Mount—and southward," he commanded.

The aeroplane rose in little leaps and

bounds, and then in a steady swelling motion. The chassis rattled like the framework of a ship.

The air was better now. The acid fumes were less noticeable, and the nauseating itch in his throat ceased.

Why, he asked himself, did the fleet run away? Why didn't they stand and put up some sort of a battle? They would have to meet the German men of war some time—why not now? Was this the result of the thirty-six hours' conference? Was this the result of Debs' prophecy that one terrible battle would put an end to the war? Was this revenge for the sinking of the *Logan*? He felt hot with shame all over.

"Something wrong below," the pilot called to him.

The fleet had broken its formation into an irregular jumble, and each unit seemed to be dashing madly in any direction open to it. They had been in trim echelon until now, but to McCarthy it appeared as if they were all pieces of wood that a child had tumbled out of a box. There was something wrong, but what it was he couldn't imagine. The island of calm water was widening rapidly.

Aeroplanes droned lazily in the distance, and as McCarthy swung around on his upward spiral he saw two biplanes flash underneath at full speed.

If this panic and flight before the broadside of the German battleships were the action he was sent to report, McCarthy felt he would rather not go back. And he thought with a choke of the white-faced thousands who had crowded Broadway and asked for and been assured of protection barely ten hours before.

He looked down and gasped. The battleships were racing in all directions in mad flight. A huge squat cruiser cut through a torpedo boat that had got in its way as a saw cuts through a plank. The aeroplanes spiralled gracefully underneath.

A line of flaming balls dropped from the nearest biplane. They fell downward in a thin red line.

Something cold seemed to grip McCarthy about the throat.

"Up! Up! Up, man, for God's sake!" he shouted.

The aeroplane rose with a succession of jarring leaps. McCarthy felt he wanted to tear the elevator lever from the pilot's hand and force her up himself.

Little patches of green flame flashed out all over the island. They broadened and spread and touched the rims of each other. They widened and met around the battleships and seemed to lick them up and engulf them. From below there came a crackling as of an immense firing line.

The green became a flaring yellow that turned red. The island was now a flaming irregular circle. There were no ships outside it. There was a steady roar.

McCarthy looked at it for a moment. Then he understood.

"For God's sake, let's get away from this!" he shouted.

The pilot swung on his wheel; the aeroplane lurched for a moment, then steadied up. They raced southward.

McCarthy looked back. There was an immense cloud of black smoke that rolled and spread and curled at the edges. Here and there dark red and purple flames licked through it for an instant and disappeared. Toward the center a pillar of fire shot up like the flame of a volcano. There was a sound like the roar of thunder.

The thunder behind was punctuated every few instants with terrific crashes. Through the roar and boom he thought he could distinguish voices shrieking and entreating, and then he knew that that was impossible. Heat seemed to blow upward as from a blast pipe. There were innumerable particles of fine soot in the air.

The heat faded off and the roar grew less deafening. They were well out of the fire zone now, and McCarthy discovered with surprise that his hands had been gripping the stanchions until the wire had cut into them, and that his breath was coming in short, gasping pants. His heart seemed to beat with the thud of a Nasmyth hammer.

So that was the appalling thing! Good

God, he could scarcely think of it! Between the crews of the dreadnaughts and cruisers and mosquito fleet and the brigades on the gigantic transports, there must have been fully one hundred thousand souls.

So that was the plan of the grim, terrified council—to deal with the threat of the racing fleet as a surgeon would cauterize gangrene!

Burned alive! He gasped. With their battleships and their huge fourteen-inch guns, with their batteries and flashing cavalry and stolid engineers, with their squat sword bayonets and short, vicious Mausers, they had set out to make a world empire, as the little fat man from Corsica had set out, and they had gone through and had been withered in the fringe of hell.

He could picture the shrieking terror on the men of war as the licking walls of flame surrounded them—the plunge from the burning decks to the flaming sea, the wild, insane fear, the tumbling, yelling, blaspheming crews, the few groups standing with folded arms and tight lips, the men skulking into passages with the barrels of their automatics in their mouths.

Now he could understand the set faces of the Guardsmen when they left the council room, and the faltering voice of Debs and the hard lines around the mouth of the President. The boys had gone to that blazing, roaring hell as One had gone to his grim angular Cross.

He felt a quiver go through him. He, the battle-hacked soldier of fortune, who, for the love of it, had sneaked to Tripoli and fought the shrieking, rushing Arabs with the Bersaglieri, who had been with Peter of Montenegro when the huge Anatolians, drunk with the word of the Prophet, had flung themselves again and again against the Balkan lines—he felt terror-stricken and was quivering as with fever.

God, those polo-playing, yacht-racing, kid-gloved boys, whom he had always looked upon as parasites and good-for-nothings, whom he had despised because they lived on wealth amassed by their people before them—they had gone voluntarily into a flaming death, with no

chance for escape, with the certainty of perishing in those sickening yellow flames! There was nothing like it since the world began.

At last he brought the machine to rest on the water, the terrified pilot at his side, and behind him the grim black cloud that was the pall of the navy.

They were right in that council room. There would never be another war. They could have his commission back the moment he got into port. He felt as if he could never look at a battleship again, or at a machine gun or at a war-plane.

He would have to go back and file his report. It would be all over now. He touched the pilot on the arm.

The pilot turned around. His eyes were dull and foolish. He began laughing and babbling in Swedish.

"Oh, well, I'll handle her myself." Nothing could move him now.

He changed places and took the wheel. The aeroplane darted along the water for a few yards, breasted a wave and rose. The moon had faded into a thin ribbon of gray and dawn was coming up.

So that was the end of soldiering! Never again, he was sure, would hostile armies and navies set out to enforce the will of an autocratic war lord by fire

and destruction. Such a blow as this he had just witnessed had never been dealt a foe in all the history of warfare. He couldn't imagine them fighting in Europe tomorrow when they heard of it. He could picture the battling armies terror-stricken, the blanched faces in the war offices, the horror in Berlin. Ha! That was a cure for rabies!

He could see in the distance a huge black spot on the waters, and felt a vague fear of going near it. And as he approached, it resolved itself into a coating of scum and soot, with pieces of charred wood floating about in it, and mangled burnt things at which he was afraid to look. In the middle a lop-sided grotesque hulk stood out like a monument.

Well, his work was done. He would go back to the white-faced mob on Broadway and bid them return to their half-dry mains and their half-built skyscrapers and to the columns of figures on their desks. He would bid them go back to their cabarets and their dancing and their moving pictures; for war was over, for now and for all time.

He turned and flew westward, and as he raced along he felt that the hundred thousand tortured things behind were stretching out charred hands to grip him.



MIDDLE AGE MORALIZES

By Allen Sutherland

THE remembrance of love sometimes surpasses the sweetness of love itself.

Night is the daytime of the soul.

It is regrettable to be without ambition, but it is fatal to be without ideals.

Only great natures can subsist and thrive on truth, although it is the natural food of the soul.

Age is the twilight of the mind. To its tempered vision harsh things should soften and lose their harshness; and because it is too late to retrieve ourselves, we will be loath to condemn the faults of others.

The virtue of some men is a fortress of defense instead of a garden of beauty.

Impatience with the failings of others is the measure of forgetfulness of our own.

BALLADE OF MY LADY'S BOOK

By Charles Campbell Jones

FULL green and gold, and open, there
Upon her knees the light book lies;
She turns the page with studied care,
Her dark, long lashes mask her eyes;
Her bosom lifts, I think she sighs—
As dear as gold of Inca mines,
As sweet spring's green is my surmise—
I think she reads between the lines.

She knows I watch her. White and fair
I see her throat's full beauty rise;
Her lithe hand floats across her hair
And back some wayward tendril ties;
As one who for the soul's weal tries
Deep riddles wrought with simple signs—
Yet holds the answer no surprise—
I think—she reads—between the lines.

Is it some book of wisdom rare,
Some ancient theory time denies,
Some weak-winged verse that may not bear
Too much of message ere it dies?
What bookshop is it where one buys
What knowledge halts at, nor defines?
The page is turned, the moment flies,
I think she reads—between the lines.

L'ENVOI

Ho, Printer! Could thy art devise
A mood, a cloud, a star that shines?
'Tis Love, his merry ways and wise,
I think, she reads between the lines.



IMITATION is the sincerest confession of one's limitations.



ALIMONY is the forfeit Cupid exacts of those who marry their first and not their last love.

PEOPLE WANT PICTURES

By Freeman Tilden

IN the upper right hand corner of the first page of the *Standard*, in that part of the newspaper's anatomy known to printers as the "right ear," there used to appear the slogan: "All the News While It Is News."

This slogan does not appear nowadays, since the space it occupied was taken over by the keen advertising agent of Snabb's Cod Liver Oil. But even in the old days the slogan was all too modest. The *Standard* was never a journal content with publishing the news while it was news. It calculated on publishing the news slightly before it became news. This laudable ambition sometimes led to distressing incidents, especially when the *Standard* got ahead of juries in announcing verdicts; yet the *Standard* was acknowledged to be a crackerjack newspaper: there was no doubt about that.

The city editor of the *Standard* was Jerome Stull. He was a man with one idea, that idea being "news." To Jerome Stull everything was news or it wasn't news; and if it wasn't news, it wasn't worth bothering about. The Flood was a good "story" on the day the tide reached its high mark; Stull would then have given it the first page with a head that stretched right across the seven columns, and there would have been a coarse screen halftone picture of Mr. and Mrs. Noah and a picture of the "first baby elephant ever born in an ark." But a week afterward Stull wouldn't have run the story with a single line head on an inside page. Because, you see, it was no longer news.

Kings might die and kingdoms fall—it was news to Stull. A ship went down in mid-ocean, hundreds of lives were

lost: Stull said it was a big piece of news, and ordered out the whole staff on it. "Go dig up something," he said to one of the cub reporters.

"Where shall I go?" asked the innocent.

"Go to hell, if you get a good lead," replied Stull without a smile. The reporter did not go that far, naturally; nor did Stull expect he would; but that was Stull all over. They said he was the coolest man in an emergency that ever trod the pave of Newspaper Row.

Once in a while, on a quiet night, the "boys" would flit downstairs to old John Patterson's place, and over the drinks would discuss the question: "Has Stull a human soul?" Nobody ever produced evidence to prove that the city editor was so encumbered.

He was a little man, Stull, with a paunch that had been acquired by much sitting at desks reading badly printed pages. The hair was mostly gone off the head of him; and yet there was a sort of second fuzzy crop of it coming on top; and it was noted that in times of excitement (or rather in times of stress, because Stull never got excited), this hirsute renaissance would stand straight up, and would not lie down until the period of stress had passed.

Stull was married and had children; but nobody ever saw them. That was natural, however, for no real newspaper man ever brings his family into the office. Did he love his wife? Did he love his children? Or had he ceased to be interested in them the day they ceased to be news? Nobody knew.

Well, also Stull had a little black mustache that was not large enough to conceal his bad teeth. He might have

had better teeth if he had had time to go to the dentist; but he had no time for such a thing. They say that all the time he had left from the *Standard* and from his bed he put in reading books and magazines that dealt with outdoor sports. Stull must have got his fresh air and relaxation thus vicariously, for he generally put in his three weeks' vacation hanging around Police Headquarters and the Criminal Courts; and he never failed to drop into the office at least once a day, to see how things were going along.

Nobody liked Stull, and nobody disliked him. He was regarded as a precise, automatic machine. He was held to be a strict taskmaster, but a fair one. He seldom uttered any personal comment on a good story or a bad one produced by his reporters; but in the event of an exceptionally successful bit of strategy, the reporter usually found a cheque in his letter box the following day, and his thoughts turned naturally to Stull. Also he had the actual "firing" power, though the slip telling of "services no longer required" ostensibly came from the business office.

Now one more thing about Jerome Stull. I am not prepared to say that he was the first man to emphasize the profuse use of illustrations in daily newspapers. Probably the idea came to a number of men about the same time. But Stull's religion, his one Commandment, his pontifical injunction, could be expressed in the words, "Get a picture!"

Whenever a reporter left the *Standard* office, those words, though often unspoken, dinned in his ears. The paramount feature of his quest for news was the discovery of a printable picture. Pictures of women took the highest premiums, but a picture of a gatepost or a Sicilian laborer shoveling in a ditch was preferable to no picture at all. Over Stull's desk was a placard that had been drawn to order by someone in the art department of the newspaper:

Remember! People want PICTURES!

Sometimes, sending a new man on an "assignment," Stull would drag himself up from his desk and go as far as the

door. At the top of the stairs he would lay his hand on the shoulder of the neophyte and say, in a tranquil but impressive voice: "And don't come back without a picture."

"Don't come back without a picture!" It was not seemingly uttered as a threat, and yet—the young man usually came back with a picture.

One night, late in January, about half past ten, Stull was eating lunch with one hand and reading copy with the other. Every night he ate two ham sandwiches, a wedge of apple or other pie and a large red apple; and it was just so much good food tossed away, so far as anybody could see, for the man was obviously unaware of the process of eating. It was an operation as mechanical as that of the Mergenthaler linotypes upstairs.

A boy came in with a small strip of Associated Press copy and handed it to Stull with the remark: "Mr. Guild says there may be a good city end to this." By which was meant, of course, that a piece of news that had come in over the Associated Press wires contained a reference to something or somebody that could be reached by a staff reporter.

Stull glanced at the strip of paper. Then he called a boy. "Tell Mr. Muir to step in," he ordered.

After a few moments a middle-aged man with a black beard entered. "Muir," said the city editor, proffering the strip of paper, "there may be something good in this. Jump out on it right away—and don't fail to get a picture."

The bearded man turned away without a word. "Wait a minute, Muir," called the city editor. "You fell down bad on that Willis story last night."

"They said they had no picture," replied the other man.

"They bluffed you," persisted Stull. "The *Gazette* ran a picture this morning. Didn't you see it?"

"I didn't notice it," replied Muir.

"I wish some of you fellows would read the other papers," went on Stull. "That's part of your work. Well, remember, get a picture. People want pictures, Muir. That's what they buy newspapers for."

"I'll try," said Muir, and went out.

Stull shook his head doubtfully, and went on with his sandwich.

Donald Muir went to his desk in the city room, sat down, put on his spectacles and read the message. It said:

St. Louis, Jan. 26.—Dorothy Schumaker, said to be the daughter of John Schumaker, of Greenpoint, Mass., died here yesterday under circumstances that resulted in the arrest of Dr. J. L. Goodkinn and a vaudeville actor named Dick Wallace. Both men are held without bail.

To Muir, who had been long in the newspaper business, the story contained no mystery. He had seen hundreds of such messages before. With half a sigh he rose and went to a suburban directory, and there found his man. Then he crossed the big room to his locker, put on his overcoat and muffler, stuffed his pipe with tobacco and lighted it and went out to the elevator.

As he went out the main door into the street an ugly burst of gale caught him and threw him up against the building. The temperature was down around the zero point, and big blotches of black clouds scudded across the strip of sky that formed the ceiling of Newspaper Row.

Muir stepped back into the doorway and pulled his coat collar up around his ears. Then he struck off to the nearest station of the trolley line that went out to Greenpoint, five miles away.

There were few persons on the car. Muir went to the front end and banked himself against the corner. Then he took a little volume from his pocket and tried to read. But as the car raced and jounced along, a single phrase echoed and reëchoed through Muir's brain: "People want pictures."

Muir had come over to the *Standard* from the defunct *Argus* about a month before. The *Argus* had been a slow-going old journal for more than a century. It had printed a solid page of editorials every day on subjects that the editors considered important, but which the main body of newspapers did not; for the *Argus* is now no more.

The *Argus* had taken a good deal of pride in its claim that its columns were clean and its representatives (as it called

its reporters) were gentlemen. That was true. But the penalty was that the columns were unread and the gentlemen were not well paid. Donald Muir had been on the *Argus* for twenty years—and then came the crash. How he managed to get a job on the *Standard* nobody could guess. Better reporters than he went from office to office, with smaller and smaller ambitions, until they finally drifted out of town.

He was not a good reporter, and he knew it. The newspaper men were of one opinion: "Donald is the whitest man alive, but how the devil did he blow into this business?" It was impossible not to love the man when you knew him. Time after time reporters for the other newspapers, meeting Donald on an assignment, would give him the details that he so earnestly desired but lacked the faculty of obtaining.

In the old days on the *Argus* this had been all very well, for the *Argus* held an easy-going conception of what constituted "news." But here on the *Standard*, in competition with a horde of wild-eyed youngsters, many just out of school, who had romantic notions about the newspaper business and would go to any lengths to get the most trivial detail—here Donald's plight was pitiable.

Tall, thin, black-bearded Donald, with soft brown eyes and something queerly unworldly about you, where are you these days, Donald? In a better business, I hope.

He was the gentlest soul that ever strayed into the region of morning newspapers. A Scotchman born, he had all those tenderest qualities of the Scotch when they are tender, and much of the poetry of the Scotch when they incline to poetry. He had, indeed, written several ballads that had a small sale.

Donald Muir knew that he had no business with the *Standard*—but he had a wife and two children at home, and he grasped what he could. And one man in particular on the *Standard* knew that Donald had no business with that enterprising newspaper—and that man was Stull. Further, when Donald Muir walked out of the city editor's room

that January night, Stull, sandwich in hand, had already made up his mind to send a note to the business office, a crisp note that would separate Donald from the payroll the following Friday.

The car jolted and slammed along, grinding and shrieking on the chilled iron at curves, past big piles of dirty snow that had been thrown out of the way of traffic and left to melt and blacken, past long blocks of petty stores, mostly dark, then out into the region of single houses with a white space in front that was a green space in summer, and finally to the end of the car line, where the conductor nimbly jumped out, with one hand clutching his side pocket, and pulled one trolley pole down and put another up. And here, at one side of a square, Donald got off.

He got off alone. There were two lighted stores in the square—one a drugstore and the other a sort of waiting room. Donald crossed to the drugstore and made inquiries for the street he wanted. He was directed by the clerk, who thought it was about three-quarters of a mile—might be a mile. Before he left the store the reporter glanced at his notes to reassure himself of the name and street number. Then he struck out.

"I mustn't fall down again," he muttered as he passed out into the cold. "Jobs aren't easy to get." And he fell to thinking of Fiske and Fitzjames and the rest of the men who had been thrown out of work when the *Argus* suspended.

Fighting against the wind, with his blood, never too warm, chilled by the searching cold, Donald Muir footed it through the half-darkness. At each intersecting street he paused and strained his eyes at a sign, but feeling sure that he had not gone far enough, he wasted little time. On one corner he met a man, scudding along with head turtled into his coat, and asked him for direction, but the man was timid or surly and would not stop. Finally he came to a house that showed lights in the front rooms, and he went to the door.

"Pleasant Street? Right here at this corner," said the man who answered the bell.

"Do you happen to know of a man named Schumaker that lives on this street, and could you tell me where?" asked Donald, his teeth chattering.

"There was a man by that name lived four houses down on the right, but he's gone away. Been gone two months or more."

"And you don't know where he's gone?"

"No; it's rather queer— Won't you step in? Rather a queer case," he continued, after the reporter had gone inside. "He's a fine old gentleman, and he's been all broken up on account of a daughter leaving home. That is, not his real daughter, but a girl he and his wife had adopted, and that they just worshiped you might almost say. About two months ago—his wife died last year—he disappeared. Everything is in the house just as he left it, but there's only one person knows where he is, and that's the postmaster, and he had instructions not to tell. Are you any—relation? I don't want to seem inquisitive."

"No relation, no. I'm a newspaper reporter," replied Donald.

"Something's happened to the old man?" asked the householder, showing excitement.

"No, not that I know of," replied Donald. "Then you say only the postmaster knows where the old man is?"

The other man nodded and would have pursued the subject, but the reporter opened the door and stepped out.

"I thank you," said Donald. "I may as well be going."

Donald Muir went down the steps dazed. There was a sinking at his heart that made him, for the while, oblivious to the cold. He did not know which way to turn. A keen, practised news sleuth would have thought of a hundred things to do; but poor Donald, who had no great heart for the business, and little skill in it, knew of only one: to go back to the office. He knew how Stull would look when he came in empty-handed. He knew that excuses didn't "go" on the *Standard*, where it was said that the only good excuse a man could present was his dead body. And he thought of the wife and kids—and then he put his

hand to his forehead, and on this frigid street, in a northwest gale, he wiped away sweat.

Like all men who are naturally timid, naturally sensitive, Donald mechanically began to do the unthinkable thing. Ensnared in this mad hunt for news, and quickened by the fear of being out of work, the reporter turned down Pleasant Street on the right hand side, and counted off houses to the fourth house. This was a modest little old-fashioned cottage that loomed very soft in the night. The other houses on the street were dark, save for a light in one upper story room a little distance beyond.

Muir went into the yard, clinging to the leeward side. The snow was crusted, and he walked along on top of it without difficulty. Soon he was on the back porch, where he stood, listening to the pounding of his heart and shivering.

"I've got to do it," muttered Donald. "I can't be thinking now of myself"—and he tried the window that opened on the porch. It was immovable. One window after another, that he could reach, yielded no temptation. But suddenly it occurred to him that his own key, by long habit, hung on a nail behind a certain pair of blinds. Might not this householder have the same custom?

The reporter's gloved hands numbly sought behind the blind nearest the porch door. Suddenly one of his fingers struck a projection. The next moment he had a key and was standing stupidly in front of the door, with nothing to keep him from housebreaking but his whole life's training and prejudices. Then he recalled his errand and turned the key in the lock.

It seemed colder within the house than without. It was that dead air chill that is almost unbearable in empty or vacated houses. Donald lighted a match and looked around. He was in the kitchen. There were two small kerosene lamps on the shelf over the stove, and with utter abandon he lighted one of these, and turned it up high. On the kitchen table were a few dishes, with scraps of food in them, just as they had been left at the departure of Schumaker. A wall clock over the table looked down

quietly and told the last time it had known before it died—seven minutes past one. Donald was prompted to look at his own watch. It was eleven fifty. He would have to be quick! He did not know how often the electric cars ran at that hour, if indeed they ran at all.

From the kitchen Donald passed into the dining room. Nothing there arrested his attention, and he went into the parlor. Luckily—or perhaps unluckily—for him, there was nobody on the street, and nobody to see the light in the house.

The sight of three photographs on the marble mantel sent a tingling along the limbs of the gaunt reporter. One was that of an elderly woman, hair dressed in the old-fashioned manner, and a little lace ruffle around her neck. This was undoubtedly that of the late Mrs. Schumaker. On the other end of the mantel was a photograph of a man, doubtless of John Schumaker. The old man's head was bald, and he wore a short beard, with upper lip shaven, giving him a stern look as he seemed to gaze upon the photograph that rested in the middle place on the shelf.

Up to this third photograph Donald brought the lamp and gazed at it steadfastly for a moment. A beautiful girl she must have been at that hour when the photographer posed her. Something queenly about the poise of her head, something coquettish about the careful carelessness of her coiffure—and on the bottom right hand corner, written obliquely in angular "fashionable" script: "To Daddy with love from Dorothy, June 12, 1911."

Twice Donald Muir put that picture in his pocket. Twice he removed it and set it back on the mantel. "Oh, God help me!" he murmured.

He turned away then, and nearly quit the room without the photograph. Then the words "people want pictures" flitted through his mind, and likewise the image of Stull, sitting at that desk about six miles away—Stull, with his mask of indifference and his power over the very wills of men—of Donald Muir, for instance—

He did it. He thrust the photograph into his overcoat pocket, retreated to the

kitchen, blew out the lamp, carefully placed it back on the shelf, locked the door behind him, returned the key to its place like a careful family man, and with an inward sob and a lightness of head, almost ran down the deserted street the way he had come.

When Donald Muir came into the city editor's room, Stull was sitting there as if only a minute had elapsed since the reporter went out. For a moment this seemed clearly incredible to Donald. It was as though he had been away from the office a long time.

"Well?" said Stull, looking up. "Any story?"

Donald pulled the picture from his pocket and laid it on the desk.

"You—got it?" There was something unflattering in the mild tone of surprise.

"Yes," replied Muir thickly.

"They gave up easy," replied the city editor, himself unconscious probably of the sneer implied.

"I stole it," answered Donald in a thin voice. "I broke into the house. There was nobody there."

"You?" Stull, the man of impregnable emotions, rose from his chair. "You don't mean it, Muir!"

Muir nodded, scarlet in the face, and then he swayed and grasped the top of the desk to save himself.

"Here, sit down," ordered Stull. "You're all in. It is a frightful night, that's a fact. Wait a minute, Muir; I've got a bottle—I didn't know it was in you, upon my word—pinched it—say, you were taking long chances—take a drink of this, a good stiff one—but I don't see how they can get anything on us—"

Muir just stared frozenly in front of him. He either didn't hear or he didn't care.

"Here, Jimmie," called Stull, "run into Mr. Leeson's room and tell him to get ready to take a story from Mr. Muir. I'll let you turn your facts over to Leeson, Muir," he continued. "You've done enough."

"Yes, I've done enough," responded Muir colorlessly. Then he began to wonder what was the story he was going

to give Leeson. He hadn't even tried to see the postmaster in Greenpoint—the only man that knew anything about Schumaker's whereabouts; he would have to "fake" it. . . .

The paper went to press, city edition, at twenty minutes past three. At half past three the morning hawks were peddling it to the hangovers, newspaper men and other unfortunates. Donald Muir was in his chair in the big city room. He was the only man left. Stull had just given "good night" upstairs, and put on his coat.

At twenty minutes after five Muir was still sitting at his desk. Then the mop-women and sweepers came through and he had to get out. So he walked downstairs the seven flights, as the elevator had stopped running, and across the street to an all-night lunch, and there had an egg sandwich and coffee.

At six o'clock, or thereabouts, the saloon under the *Standard* office opened, and a big boy in blue overalls came out and threw a pail of water in the gutter. Then Donald went across and amazed the sleepy bartender, who knew him as a most temperate person, by ordering whiskey.

"Any particular kind, Mr. Muir?"

"No."

It nearly gagged Donald when he put it down. He had never done much with anything stronger than ale. But he had another.

"You don't feel well?" asked the bartender solicitously.

Donald shook his head.

"I wouldn't monkey with that stuff if you're not used to it," said the bartender. "You better go home now, hadn't you?"

Donald paid and went out. The next saloon was half a block away. He went in there and had another drink. He told the bartender that he was disgusted with things and was going to get a job in Chicago.

"Been rubbing it into you, have they?" replied the barkeep, in that greasy tone of mollification which is employed to keep undergraduate drunks from smashing glasses on the bar.

"'Nother one," said Donald.

In the middle of the forenoon Donald fell asleep in a cellar saloon in the alleyway back of the *Standard* office. They let him sleep there, according to the pleasant custom of the place, until noon, when they woke him up and told him he needed a bracer. Having acquired the bracer, Donald started out and met Sammy Dalton, an ex-reporter, coming in. Ordinarily he would have steered clear of Dalton, who was a shady character; but now, for some reason, Dalton loomed friendly on the horizon. "What'll ye have?" asked Donald. Then they both had.

Suddenly Donald pounded his lean fist on the table and made it shake so that the waiter glanced over suspiciously. "He's a beast!" he cried. "And I'll tell him so!"

"Who's a beast?" asked the other man.

"Stull. I'll tell him so."

"He's a beast, all right," replied Dalton, "but I wouldn't tell him so if I wanted to keep my job. I lost mine for less than that."

"He's a dirty beast. I broke into a house last night—stole a picture—of a dead girl—"

"You stole—" Dalton rubbed his unshaven chin incredulously. Then he burst out with laughter. "'Scuse me, Donald," he apologized, "but the idea of your breaking into a house—stealing anything— Say, you've been hitting up the stuff, ain't you?"

"It's the truth," moaned Donald. "And it isn't the breaking in—it's the picture. And the old man. And his heart broken, as it is—"

"Don't do that!" pleaded Dalton, sniffing. "I'm getting weepy. Order another round, Donald—I can't. I'm going to get some money tonight." Two more drinks appeared, and then Donald told the story.

"Forget it!" was Dalton's advice. "If you're going to stick with the *Standard* you've got to have your nerve with you. Besides, there's nothing that would tickle Stull so much as pulling off a trick like that. He won't say anything probably, but you'll hear from it some

way. And don't you worry about getting pinched—they've got nothing on you, as I can see. Let's have one more, Donald, and forget it."

To Dalton's amazement, Donald Muir suddenly rose, and with unsteady legs but steady and piercing eye, stared him in the face. "You're like all the rest of them, Dalton. I'll stay with ye no longer." And he pulled himself together and navigated skillfully out of the place.

At Dennis' place Donald drifted among a group of afternoon newspaper men who were throwing dice at one end of the bar. "Good old scout!" cried one of them. "Here's Donald. Come and have a lemon seltzer, Donald!"

"I'll have whiskey," said Donald thickly. Then they saw his face and his eyes, and they believed him.

"For heaven's sake! I didn't know you ever did *this*!" said one of them.

"It's on account of the beast," was the reply.

The men looked at each other knowingly. They suspected tremens. "What—what beast?" asked one of them.

"Stull. I'll tell him so. I'm not afraid of him."

Donald had to rehearse the story all over again. They were all decent chaps. They could even see Donald's hysterical point of view, a little. One of them said, in an effort to console the bearded man: "It's a shame, Donald. We all have to do things that go against the grain. I wouldn't feel too bad about this. If you hadn't got it, somebody else probably would. Your *Argus* training is against you. Why don't you try to get a job on some weekly or a magazine?"

"I'm as good a newspaper man as any of ye," replied Donald, with a combative spirit that was new in him.

"I think you are—and better," said the young fellow, unruffled. "That's why you've got no business on the *Standard*. The *Standard* isn't a newspaper. It's a scavenger."

"Ye'll never say a truer word," cried Donald. "What'll ye have?"

"I'll bet you haven't been home," said one of the men. "Have you called

up your folks, Donald?" Muir shook his head. "Hadn't I better call them up for you, and say you've been held over?"

"Would ye please?" replied Donald. "I didn't dare to—there might be something queer about my voice—"

"You come with me over to the St. James, and I'll get you a room, Donald. You can get a few hours' rest before you report at the office."

"Thanks," was the answer, "but I don't care to. I'm not doing this because I like it, Mr. Starr. I'm keeping my courage up to meet Stull."

"Now don't be foolish. Wait till you get another job. Listen here, Donald—"

But the middle-aged man had broken away, and refused to be brought back.

At half past six Donald Muir went to the office. He opened his letter box and took out the contents. There was one sheet of paper that had a news story from that morning's *Standard* pasted to it. Donald caught sight of the headline, of the halftone picture that went with it, and read at the bottom the blue-penciled commendation: "Good. J. S."

The man went white; and then the blood came rushing back to his head. He staggered over to a chair, and there sat with bowed head and tore the paper into shreds, threw it on the floor and ground the pieces with his heel. Several letters dropped out of his hand meanwhile, but he did not notice them.

A few minutes passed. Then he heard somebody open a big letter box on the wall at the opposite side of the room and remove a big armful of papers. He knew that was Stull. He sat quietly. He gave the city editor time to get into his room and start to work. Then he got up and went in.

"Stull," cried Donald suddenly, discarding the "Mr." that he had always used, "I want to tell ye ye're a beast! A dirty beast! If ye've got any manhood in ye, ye'll fight."

"Drunk or crazy," murmured Stull. Then he said aloud: "Get out of here, Muir. Go off somewhere and sober up."

Donald seemed not to hear. "Ye made a thief of me last night, Stull," he

bawled, "but that's not all. What of the puir old man that's nearly crazed about the dead girl? Isn't it bad enough to have the bare facts printed in the papers without a sneaking reporter stealing the picture of the lass? I can hardly keep my hands off ye while I tell ye what I think, Stull."

"Muir," said the city editor, without a tremor, "don't be absurd. Don't be an old woman. I didn't tell you to steal anything. You did that of your own accord, didn't you?"

"No!" cried Donald, drawing himself up tall again. "Ye cannot blind me, Stull. It's the truth ye didn't tell me to steal, but I lay it at your door. Right they are: the *Standard* is but a scavenger. And what are ye, Stull, but a raven? And those that work for ye but miserable carrion crows?"

"Shut up!" cried Stull. "Get out and stay out!"

"Ye'll come, too," replied Donald. Quickly he leaned over the rail and seized Stull's collar. He was not a strong man, but the alcohol in him gave him temporary vigor. Somehow he managed to jerk Stull out of his chair and against the swinging gate, which gave way outward. Then he fell upon him. His long arms beat like flails, and he cursed as no one had ever heard him.

"Help!" yelled Stull. "He's crazy! Take him off!" Several frightened office boys gathered around the door. There were not many men on that part of the floor. When a telegrapher came running out of the telegraph room and dragged Donald from his victim, Stull was a grotesque sight. He was bleeding at the nose; his shirt was reddened. And Donald stood glaring and panting, muttering, "Dirty beast" now and again between his teeth.

A few minutes later Donald staggered over to his desk, took out his pencils, paper, books, drinking glass and other property, and wrapped them in a newspaper. Then he took the key to the desk and the key to his letter box from a key ring, and gave them to a boy.

"Give these to Mr. Stull, Jimmie," he said. "I won't be needing them any more."

THE PAMELEON

By Ernest L. Starr

TONY had planned an entire nov-elette during the ten minutes' silence. Mr. Hemenway ended it, bringing his gentle, serious gaze down from the carved capital of a veranda pillar. Very quietly he said to Tony: "Will you marry my daughter, Anthony?"

Tony's cigarette case slipped from his grasp, brought up with its spring against the floor, and spilled the brown-tipped contents in confusion. Tony looked up quickly, to find perfect seriousness in the face of his grave, kindly host.

"I beg your pardon, sir?" Tony said vacantly.

Mr. Hemenway put his half-empty glass of Chablis to one side and leaned confidently forward. "I've been thinking of making the request for the last hour," he said.

The veranda was full of people. It was very hot. Tony applied a nicely monogrammed handkerchief to his brow, drew his throat as far as possible from out his moist collar and trained his bewildered gaze on Mr. Hemenway. At the third effort he succeeded in articulating:

"I am sure, sir, I don't understand you."

"It is very simple, Anthony," said the older man, his gray eyes expectant, patient, benign.

Tony pulled his well got-up person higher in the chair, tugged at a recalcitrant cuff and looked away. It must be the heat, Tony thought. Mr. Hemenway, however, had spent any amount of time in torridest South America, amassing the modest million or so of dollars to which his fellow Americans added a trifle every time his particular

variety of brown little coffee berry was served at table; therefore it couldn't be he who was affected by the heat.

Tony wished he had not drunk that last glass of Chablis. Something was wrong, he was certain. It couldn't be his hearing, which was excellent. It couldn't be—but wait. Tony thrust his gaze far across the lawn. He could see with perfect distinctness the zigzag lines of mortar between the stones in the high fence; therefore it couldn't be the Chablis. Yet his collar became a throttling band of metal, and he suffered under the continued inspection of Mr. Hemenway.

Always when his daughter had her young friends out, Mr. Hemenway remained close at hand, not only to fill in the gaps which experience had taught him would occur no matter how sincerely Pamela sought to keep her fluttering attention to the social business in hand, but to superintend the conclusion of the evening, which frequently came about in his power yacht or in his motors. Yet somehow he was invariably quite apart until this need for him arose, thrown to one side by the swirl of gaiety which Pamela created for her friends—on the lawn, or about the veranda, or in the high and very wide hallway, where tapestry, vertu and exquisite bits of statuary put no check on the feather-heeled frivolity into which Pamela led her followers.

Being a thoroughly courteous young man, Tony, had an idea that old people do not necessarily feel as aloof from the younger and brighter life about them as their gray hairs make them seem. Often during his late freedom of the house he had left Pamela to the others, who sub-

mitted no more willingly than he to her fairy tread upon their homage-bent heads, and slipped into a chair beside Mr. Hemenway, to converse deferentially with the older man, who had long ago been a friend to the father whom Tony himself had never known.

This afternoon, while he was one of the laughing group about Pamela, his attention had been drawn more than once to Mr. Hemenway, aloof and observant, with his eyes fixed warmly, unswervingly on his daughter. Tony thought there was something of disquiet and foreboding in the father's devoted gaze. Endowed with the uncomfortable kind of sensitiveness which extracts the unspoken word from the feel of the air, Tony found himself wondering as to the meaning of Mr. Hemenway's anxiety. When opportunity arose he joined the older man, little expecting to be thrown into a hot steam of embarrassed discomfort by so disconcerting a proposition.

Though Tony looked away, he glanced precisely as far as he was looking at the moment of Mr. Hemenway's question, and that was at the elfish small face of Pamela in the center of the group at the other end of the veranda. Her bronze hair was twisted oddly about her head. Instead of dampening her exulting gladness, the heat had sufficed with distilling the gleaming, unexpected lights of her hair, and with bringing a heightened glow from beneath her fine skin. Her eyes were brilliant with expression as, standing on a lounge seat, she recited a "Sonnet to the Sun."

Tony had seen her weep at a play, and shudder with sympathetic anguish at the suffering of one given suddenly to racking physical pain. He had felt the intensity of her emotional responsiveness as he watched her close, silent embrace of her father. He regarded her now, in her most freely assumed mood of buoyant vivacity, and an inward propulsion drove his heart to excessive exertions.

He had seen her, in fact, so variedly and consistently reflect the moods of those by whom she was surrounded that he had decided to put her into a story,

and to name her, on account of those qualities which she characteristically suggested, not Pamela but the Pameleon. It should be his masterpiece, winning him a measure of recognition which would enable him to go to her and say—

"Well, Anthony?" asked Mr. Hemenway quietly.

Suddenly Tony's embarrassment ended. His hot-browed discomfort ceased. There was no need of equivocation. He knew that he had understood aright, and by the same token he realized that the opportunity, for whatever reason held forth, and no matter how intoxicatingly grateful, was not to be thought of. He was immediately cool and smiling and at his ease. He had only to state a trifling, heartfelt banality and the conversation would be ended.

"I shan't try to understand why you have so honored me, Mr. Hemenway," he said simply, "yet I thank you very sincerely. I can only say, however, that my work"—Tony hesitated over the word, to drive in its full significance—"doesn't pay my own way, not to speak of—"

The trouble with Tony was that he thought he could write. He had thought so for a number of years, and eight months before he had relinquished the needed income from his unassuming business ventures to give all his time to "the work." His private income was infinitesimal compared to the demands of his status and associations. Much he suffered in the way of friendly badinage; much he endured of secret deprivation. When the going was not too dear, he continued to join in with the social adventures of his old-time companions. When, on the contrary, he gave the excuse of "work to do," and retired to his little study to pound the keys of a shining new typewriter, his pleasure in the task was unmarred by regret for what he gave up.

He went about it the right way. He was willing to rewrite, rewrite, condense, polish, rearrange and rewrite. Such a working plan takes time, and sometimes it ended in willingness. Tony seemed not to get ahead. He knew of no scholarships for unarrived authors, and

he hadn't the slightest intention of locking himself into a shuttered chamber and waiting for the results that come with constant, self-denying application. He couldn't afford it; therefore his application was of a different kind. He sought not, through much study and practice, to approximate the perfect style in so far as it was attainable for him, but to suit his rather facile abilities to any one of a half-dozen individual styles which had already won a definite, immediate vogue. Time enough, he told himself, to do the work that should reek with the personality and temperament of Anthony Elmore Nicholl when he had made good—and good money—by following in the track of some one of the six or more writers whose names appear with determined regularity in the leading magazines of unassorted appeal. The differentiation of his work from theirs was intentional to the extent that his temperament furnished him with a varying point of view; yet to a far wider extent the difference was naively unconscious because of his unfamiliarity with his tools; because, too, of his delayed realization that the barest measure of success in the field he had chosen follows only upon a full apprenticeship of unrecognized endeavor.

Once in a while he did a piece of work that was solely and distinctively his own—and put it gently aside, as hopes that are intimate are kept for dreaming in the dark. He was afraid to be himself. An unknown has no right to be that, he said. Some day he would dare, but that would be when he had won recognition by confining his endeavors exclusively to the literary channels for which the reading public had already shown its preference.

Mr. Hemenway was speaking: "I am fully aware of that, Anthony."

"Beg pardon, sir?"

Tony withdrew his gaze from Pamela. His thoughts had wandered painfully afield.

"That the returns from your work," Mr. Hemenway explained seriously, "are as yet scarcely sufficient—"

Tony broke in at once. "Certainly not, sir; naturally not." He was will-

ing to state the fact himself, but he shrank from appraisal at another's hands.

"It takes time, Anthony; success always does. I've spent fifteen years perfecting my plantations," Mr. Hemenway went on, "and I mean to make them better still." After a moment he concluded, "I am going back to them; they need me."

A gleam of understanding penetrated Tony's puzzled consciousness. "Going back to South America, sir?" he asked quickly.

"Next month; Pamela doesn't know." Mr. Hemenway added thoughtfully: "There are no Americans where I am going, and the Spanish women—faugh! Pamela is too nimble an imitator—" Then he reverted to his original theme with the easy insistence of one who taps at a point persistently rather than noisily: "I'll make good provision for you both if you and Pamela marry."

"Oh, sir!" protested Tony.

"Until such a time as the work—" the older man continued.

"I couldn't be a pensioner," Tony asserted firmly, "even on you, Mr. Hemenway."

"Who said anything about being a pensioner?" cried Mr. Hemenway. "I knew the meaning of self-respect before you were born, young man!"

"That assures me of your understanding, then," Tony replied. "I believe I shall make good after a while, sir. If you will let me come to you when—"

Beckoning to Tony, Mr. Hemenway stepped through a long window and into the walnut-beamed and paneled library. He went to the far end of the room and swung about a chair behind the desk. Something in Mr. Hemenway's manner brought Tony face to face with the realization that he was unequally matched against a personality whose forces were singly directed, while his own power of opposition was divided between inclination and self-obligation.

"Anthony," said Mr. Hemenway, "if I weren't sure that you have given her about all the love in your large young heart I'd say no more; but, boy, I'm an old man, and I have lived through

most of the desires that are worth while. There's one left me, the biggest of all. Sit down, Anthony; I want to tell you something."

II

THIS morning Tony occupied with great dignity the chair in which Mr. Hemenway had sat on a memorable afternoon two months earlier. It had not been difficult to grow accustomed to it. For a full week he had been writing. The great library was an inspiring workshop, dignified and silent. He had not thought of the anomaly that Pamela was the source of the busy solitude. Whatever her reason, since the beginning of the present work Pamela had not once set foot in his study.

It was wonderful to find at his very hand the opportunity to be himself; to write as he wanted to write; to be at once a dilettante and a draughtsman; to become under the stimulus of the masters the one person he had determined successfully to be—Anthony Elmore Nicholl—himself.

Opposite him was his secretary. He called her that, though he required of her only the most mechanical service. She had been taught to wait motionless by the half-hour for the halting sentences that came from the lips of the unaccustomed dictator. The agency which had sent her out to Tony immediately after the return from the Californian honeymoon had rigidly observed Mr. Nicholl's specifications, with the result that Tony found himself daily confronting a face as homely, seamed, aged and expressionless as if it dated from the eighteenth dynasty. The deftest phrase of Tony's was transcribed by Miss Johns without the appreciative flick of an eyelash, and if in dictating Tony kept his gaze from her weather-scarred features it was in order that his mood of esthetic exaltation might not be shattered by a spectacle so depressingly inartistic.

The piece he was engaged upon this morning had so long occupied his mind that the narrating of it furnished him the exquisite relief probably enjoyed by the unsuspected criminal who at last

gives himself up to the unescapable, conscience-invoked forces of retribution. Tony exulted in submitting to the mood of it. He shut his eyes and thrust his other self into the vague, fascinating atmosphere in which his characters moved. Tony's treatment of the theme was brilliantly original, yet, as a matter of fact, it was a very Maeterlinckian piece, with a number of blindish, halting persons moving disconsolately and talkatively through wet, dim, misty woods.

Necessarily, the mood of Mr. Nicholl was of primary importance in the work of calling forth so much sublimated delicacy from the sphere of subtler intuitions. Ordinarily Tony was far from moody, but one who writes of vague longings breathed out in a shadowy land has a perfect right to dim ecstatic abstractions of his own. This was the reason why Tony did not hear the light voice of one singing outside, nor see the dancing approach of a radiant girl with bronze hair heaped lustrously on her head. Tony had just managed to make one of his blind men give voice to the unutterable longings of the weaklings of the world, when two soft, magnetic hands covered his lips and lifted his cupped chin.

"Aren't you through, Tony? It's luncheon time!"

The voice, though light, was rarely clear and pleasing; the manner of speech suggested long familiarity with the essentials of persuasion and control. Tony, however, wanted nothing in the world less than luncheon. It goes without saying that a thoroughly courteous young man like Mr. Nicholl would refrain from letting his angry passions rise further than his epiglottis. Tony merely shut his mouth very tight, bringing into play an infrequently used series of muscles somewhere in the region of the jointure of the jawbone.

"Tony!" vaguely queried the voice.

Tony kissed her. It was a listless interlude, for somehow Tony seemed unable to get his face smoothed into the poorest semblance of a smile.

"Yes, Pamela?" he said.

"You aren't going to do this forever? I've stood it a week now."

"My working hours are from nine to five, Pamela. You remember we talked it over, dear."

Pamela rumbled up his hair. "Working hours!" she said, and laughed. Tony had nice dark hair, and he particularly disliked having it rumbled.

"Nine to five!" Pamela repeated, with fresh emphasis and renewed laughter. "Why, Tony, one would think—" Pamela's reason for leaving the sentence unfinished was doubtless connected with the sudden appearance of a cerise glow in young Mr. Nicholl's face and the further squaring of his chin.

"One would think what?" Tony prompted.

"Aren't you going with me to the Country Club for tea this afternoon?" Mrs. Nicholl asked.

Momentarily Tony forgot his wonderful wife, his ancient stenographer and his manners. He knew only that his blind men were scampering through the wet woods in a frolicsome fashion utterly beyond his comprehension or his checking. They were defying him, deserting him, pulling bandages from their eyes and grinning at him, all because of the brief, unwilling relaxation of his exalted sway.

"Aren't you, Tony?" insisted Pamela, with an assured little pout.

"No!" Tony announced.

Mrs. Nicholl slowly diminished the pressure of her shoulder against Tony's. She passed in front of the desk and down the long room. At the door she gave him a nitric smile, and said: "I wouldn't have gone, anyhow!"

After luncheon Tony had Miss Johns read him the morning's work. There was not a great amount of it, and one reading could scarcely restore Tony to the atmosphere from which he had been temperamentally torn. Just as Miss Johns began the second reading, this time from the beginning, Pamela quietly entered and took a seat close to Tony. For some minutes Tony heard not a word of the secretary's.

He watched Pamela with new eyes. Her fingers moved stiffly through the operation of embroidering something white with heavy linen thread. Her

head was bent forward and her brow lined in seeming concentration on the task. Quite impersonally Tony decided that her mouth and eyes were beautiful and the way her hair grew at the back of her ears very attractive. Then he began to wonder why she was here, sitting so quietly and giving so much more attention to her work than to his.

Possibly the presence of the stenographer precluded her outspoken approval of his work. Pamela would have to learn that his secretary was merely a useful piece of furniture, a mildly animated office fixture. Tony's mind was divided between listening to the smooth, picturesque sentences falling from Miss Johns's dried-toast lips and watching the effect of the piece on Pamela. Very evidently Pamela was intent on the reading, yet she gave no token of having her heart wrung by the woes of the world's weaklings. Occasionally, when her thread caught in the cloth, she gave her needle hand a peculiarly vicious jerk. Some detail of the embroidering seemed to be causing her no end of worry, for before the secretarial recitation ended Pamela's head was bowed far over the material, and Tony made the discovery that her lashes were more gold than brown, and the sweep of them more perfect than even he had realized.

Miss Johns's phonograph-like voice was silent.

"What do you think of it, Pam?" Tony asked enthusiastically.

Pamela knotted her thread with a jerk. Miss Johns sharpened a pencil and assumed a receptive attitude. The glowing pride in Tony's face became a trifle less bright. He knew Pamela would like it, knew that the intent of it would startle her pleasurably, for hadn't he on rare occasions seen the soul of her, the inmost Pamela hidden from others beneath inner and outer shells of extravagance? Besides, he liked it, and she wouldn't be the Pameleon if she did not like what those who loved her cared for.

"Like it, Pam?" he repeated.

Without looking up, Pamela said in a colorless voice: "Very interesting."

In every home there should be a "Lexicon of Things to Say to an Author." Untold suffering would be spared. Those who have repeatedly been the audience of first appeal doubtless evolve a system of phraseology which cheers the hopeful writer without committing the hearer to the desired lengths of enthusiastic approval. The unaccustomed do not realize that "interesting" is infinitely less desirable as a criticism than nothing at all. The earnest author would not have gone to the trouble of writing it, much less of asking for an estimate, if he had not known beyond the shadow of a doubt that it was "interesting." This "Lexicon" should, moreover, warn the hearers of unprinted stories that solemn young writers have an odd way of gauging the intelligence of the hearer by the criticism offered.

"But what do you really *think* of it?" Tony insisted.

Pamela looked him straight in the eye. "Really, Tony?" she said.

"Of course!" Tony urged happily.

"It's amazingly—poor," Pamela said, and drove her needle through the heart of a lily stamped on the cloth.

"Do you mean to say that you—" Tony could not continue. His tongue was thick and his face red. Fine little beads of moisture prickled on his forehead. He sat as unbending as one of the carved figures on the front of the desk. He began again: "Why, Pamela!" and again words failed him.

Volubility with Pamela was a garment. Now she calmly gave voice to a single word, thus checking the injured inquisitorial deluge from the other side of the desk.

"Mushy," was the word.

For a mere piece of furniture Miss Johns doubled up with surprising celerity. Tony's chin came forward sharply. Pamela embroidered placidly. No epiglottis could stem such a torrent as surged up from Mr. Nicholl's honestly aggrieved breast.

"Well, Pamela!" he said angrily.

"Well, Tony," Pamela broke in, "I had to tell you! You asked me—you insisted!"

"I should think," Tony continued

warmly, with inflamed preciseness of diction, "that in one's own household one might expect to find—"

"The disagreeable truth, Tony, unfailingly."

Tony's lips spread in a thin line—the attack was so completely unexpected.

Pamela rose quickly. "I wish I dared kiss you," she said, smiling regretfully. At the door she paused to state: "Tony, I'll open my piano again if you don't mind. It has been closed for a week. I suppose it won't bother you—if I play only the modern French things?"

She left the room without waiting for an answer. During the next hour Tony listened to a maddening stretch of dissonant Debussy. He sat very still, waiting for his sadly pummelled pride to readjust itself, wondering meanwhile how the music could suggest to anyone the moods which it pretended to interpret. Miss Johns also was still, reading with avid interest an article on the care of babies. Later Tony heard Pamela direct a servant to bring out one of the motors for her use. It was Tony's racer she asked for, the one car in the garage she had agreed not to drive.

Soon she stood at the door of the library, exquisitely gowned.

"Coming, Tony?" she asked.

"Where?" Tony inquired.

"To the club, for tea."

Tony helped her into her driving coat, making no reply, and offering no caution in regard to the racer. Thereafter he retired to the seat which no longer seemed the source of the worthiest utterances; sat down heavily, somberly; and permitted the natural brightness of his nature to become overcast by black clouds of gloomy discontent.

Throughout the following week Tony wrestled with his cripples. If he couldn't write atmospheric stuff, at least he could eliminate the mush from what he had already written. But he couldn't find the mush. He decided that mush is purely relative, mush which is paid for at the rate of a dollar a word possessing the flavor of ambrosia to those that like it. He was aware that much of what he had done did not deserve

Pamela's cold-blooded epithet, but he was too good an egotist to appreciate the fact that he was making a mistake common to young authors: trying too hard to be clever.

Pamela, meanwhile, had restored to the house the air which it possessed before her marriage. She and Tony no longer had those happy little breakfasts in their own sitting room. At dinner the great dining room was constantly filled. Pamela seemed intensely satisfied. No word of explanation escaped her. No adroit placing of the pawns by Tony could bring from her as much as two minutes of serious conversation.

During the day Tony kept to the library, caring little what explanation was given for his absence. He was engaged in a desperate contest. He would prove his right to be himself in this one piece of work. From nine to five he kept at it. Miss Johns grew thin under the strain. Pamela displayed no interest in his undertaking; she cared nothing for that which was closest to his heart. Yet Tony worked on, fighting against his growing doubts of himself and of her.

The distractions beyond the library door were many and noisy. Tony did not see how Pamela could permit it, nor why; but he would not ask for reason or assistance. Once he decided she was possessed of the devil; again that she had no soul, not a shadow of one; and finally that she did not love him at all. That hurt. It became his cardinal misfortune, a black, undeserved punishment which sapped up all the light in the world. He could think of nothing else during the hours he was forcing his mind to intensest exertion.

At length came a miserable day when Miss Johns was too ill to work. It seemed a fitting climax to his trials. A change in his methods at such a time would have been fatal; delay was out of the question. Tony felt that the subtle opposition to his desires had merged into something he could no longer combat. He was ready to confess his defeat.

He found Pamela on the veranda waiting for a car to be brought around to take her latest departing guest and her-

self to town. Pamela's sympathy over the loss of his secretary was warm and voluble. She offered to start at once, to go herself to an agency, secure a stenographer and send her out at once.

Shortly before noon the new stenographer came, the young woman whom Pamela herself had selected. When she entered the library Tony was actually startled; when she took the seat by his desk he was entirely disconcerted. Next to Pamela she had the most beautiful face he had ever seen. Only a long-accustomed employer can dictate to a beautiful woman. This girl was made to be looked at; to be told soft, pleasant things; to record only the speeches that dealt with her sea blue eyes and her pale hair and her full-curved lips.

Tony explained the nature of the work, then tried to begin his dictation. He could think of nothing but Pamela; Pamela who did not love him; Pamela who didn't care a tinker's blot for his hopes and ambition; Pamela who had proved past doubt that she did not love him by sending out a full-blown peach to sit in the room alone with him every day from nine to five!

Until this moment he had forced himself to think that the change which had come over Pamela was due merely to some tangent phase of her chameleon nature. He did not understand it, but he was certain that not only could he fathom it when he chose to, or had time to undertake it, but could readjust their lives and bring back the happiness which had somehow been put off at a way station. Now he understood. Pamela did not care; she never would care again. No wife who had the faintest spark of love in her heart would think for a minute of bottling up her husband with a gold-topped daughter of Pitman with a Dutch neck and a dimple in her chin.

Mr. Nicholl vowed a black-browed determination. He took out his papers, violently slammed the drawer shut, put on a green celluloid eyeshade and began to work. To get his thoughts in order, he slowly re-dictated the last of the typewritten pages before him. As the final word was transcribed he heard a

happy sigh from the other side of the desk.

"Oh, Mr. Nicholl," said the girl, trailing five shiny fingernails through her front hair, "that is perfectly beautiful!"

Tony fumed. If Pamela didn't like it, this person needn't either. The assurance of her confused Tony. He took to watching her through the green shade, as he continued to give voice to that section of the piece already thought out. At the end of each sentence a smile or a sigh was offered in tribute. Time had been when he longed for some token of appreciation from the battered Miss Johns. The present tide of approving sympathy got him to blushing furiously. That made him angrier with himself than with the girl.

When he stopped to think he was immediately disconcerted by her jingling restlessness. When the bracelets on her arms were not rattling, her long earrings were wobbling; when the earrings rested, her mesh bag scratched against the chair arm. Tony threw aside his shade and frankly stared at her. She lowered her eyes, only to raise them and look at him with such innocent, charming disregard of the professional relation between them that Tony was exasperated into complete mental rout.

Suddenly Tony thanked her with excessive politeness for her services. Then he gave her a mint julep, two days' pay and Godspeed. After he had seen her started on the return to town, he went back to his desk and tried to think it out.

It was Pamela he wanted, Pamela's love; but that was gone. He didn't know why, but it was gone. Next to that he wanted success for his work. He covered his face, pressing his palms against his tired eyes. Slowly the dancing spots cleared away, and before his inner gaze spread a woodland scene, wet, misty, rheumatic. In the distance was a low hill covered with grotesque bushes and gnarled, misshapen trees. Just this side of the hill he saw three men, running as if for their lives, with ancient draperies flapping behind them, and bare legs slashed by the thorny underbrush. Up the hill they sped. At

the top they turned to him, laughing derisively, triumphantly. Their crutches they threw high in the air; then, laughing, they dropped beneath the crest and were lost to his sight.

"Hell!" said Tony, and proceeded to tear up sheet after sheet of neatly typed matter.

He had played squash for an hour, taken a shower and painstakingly attired himself when Pamela returned from town. Dinner that evening was a quiet but not unhappy occasion for Tony.

"Seems strange to have no one here," Pamela said, after a silence of many minutes.

"I'm here, you know," remarked Tony.

"Yes, at meal times," Pamela replied, spearing a mushroom forcefully.

After a moment Tony said ingratiatingly: "Thanks for the stenographer." Pamela would not look up, therefore Tony added: "Corking looker!"

"So I thought," Pamela said briefly, with an exasperating smile.

"I fired her," Tony announced.

Tony was grossly mistaken in his anticipation of the effect of the statement. For the remaining ten minutes of dinner Pamela said nothing at all. Tony continued to work himself into a highly fretful state. As Pamela rose, she said with offensive pleasantness: "Why, Tony?" Then, when Tony regarded her silently and most reproachfully, she shrugged her shoulders and left the room.

Tony gulped down the remainder of his cordial and overtook her on the veranda. "You know very well why," he said feelingly.

There was an uncomfortable degree of aggressiveness in Pamela's voice when she said: "I'm sure I have done the best I could, Tony. If you intend to overthrow my judgment on every occasion—"

"Why, Pam, what on earth is the matter with you?" Tony said. "Pam, don't you care any more?"

"I care for people who care for me, Tony."

"I care, Pam!"

"You don't!" Pamela cried. "What

am I compared to those horrible incurables of yours?"

Then Tony understood. The names he called himself would put him in the books of a Civic Purity League. Something of the potency of those very qualities of Pamela's which he thought he understood best was driven in.

"That's all done with, Pam!" he cried.

"Truly, Tony?" Pamela was still doubtful: genius is tricky.

Tony led her into the workshop. He lifted a basket from the floor by the desk and thrust his hand down into the torn paper with which it was filled. He chose a scrap at random and read aloud the fragmentary message it bore: "The dawn, brother, and yet I cannot—" He laughed guiltily.

"Do you mean," Pamela asked seriously, "that your incapable friends are all in the basket?"

"Forever, Pamela!"

Still Pamela held him off. "Why, Tony?" she insisted judicially.

"Because I couldn't see them for thinking of you. I thought, Pam—I thought you had stopped—"

"I couldn't, Tony. You know it!"

A number of trade journals have recently been extending to Mr. Hemenway the warmest of congratulations in connection with the success of the new, snappy, remarkably clever advertisements of his coffee which are to be seen everywhere.

Tony writes them.



LOVE IN TAORMINA

By Robert Garland

THE almond groves are all abloom, a miracle on every tree,
White, cool as Etna up above,

Below, far, far below, the shimmering blue Ionian Sea

Gleams like your eyes, your eyes, my love.

A soft Sicilian sunset breeze comes wandering down the warm white lane,

Filled with the sensuous, sunlit south—

The cacti, crimson, like your mouth

A blur of passion, tells of love, and love's sharp, never-ending pain.

From out the valley calm and cool, sweeping in silence to the sea,

Played on a goatherd's drowsy reed,

The *Pastorale*, piercing sweet, comes quivering up to you and me,

Filling the silence's aching need.

The smoke from Etna's snowy crown trails mistlike through the dancing air

Above a sea as still as death—

The hurried intake of your breath

Lures you and me to deeds and thoughts that otherwise we would not dare.



"DID they hang Casey?"

"Yes; and 'Pat. Pending' was the sign they pinned on him."

FOR A GUITAR

By Donn Byrne

THE night was dark, when suddenly
A voice came ringing from afar,
Singing *La belle dame sans merci*
To the faint thrum of a guitar.

Then Paracelsus raised his head,
And cursed the singer for his song.
He closed the book wherein he read,
Wherein he read the whole day long.

And near and near the singer came,
And clearer grew the melody:
"Ah, for your heartlessness have shame,
Ma belle dame sans merci!"

A curtain moved. A taper shone.
She hearkened to the minstrelsy.
She stayed a moment and was gone,
La belle dame sans merci.

But Paracelsus marked her hair,
Her rounded arm, her throat so full,
And murmured softly, standing there,
"Ah, beautiful! Most beautiful!"

He left his glass, his globe, and book,
His instruments of alchemy.
His magic he straightway forsook,
And all his potent wizardry.

He left the tome he once read in
To pore o'er books of gallantry,
Seeking to know how he might win
La belle dame sans merci.

Until she rose, one night o' spring,
Ah, belle dame sans merci!
And fled, with neither wreath nor ring,
With a fighting man of Picardy.

LITTLE FACE*

By Roland Oliver

CHARACTERS

SCAR CHEEK (*a philosopher*)
YELLOW TOOTH (*his mate*)
SHORT LEG (*a handicapped hunter*)
PINK WEED (*a prehistoric ingénue*)
GAB GAB (*a neighbor*)
MUCH TALK (*another neighbor*)
LITTLE FACE (*an old maiden*)
CLICK KNEE (*a stranger*)
LOOSE LIP (*a family man*)
ROUND ARM (*a matrimonial prize*)

PLACE: *A forest in central Europe.*

TIME: *The prehistoric era.*

SCENE—A collection of cave dwellings in the clearing of a forest. The time is spring. Extending across the stage is a hill, beyond which may be seen trees and wild country. At different levels in the hill are two caves, with small, irregular entrances, about which are strewn the bleached bones of large animals. Leaning against the fronts of the caves are stone axes, assorted clubs and one or two great bows of bark-covered wood. Pegged against the hill slopes are skins of animals. There is a third and larger cave entrance at the right. Handy to the entrances are large boulders which may be rolled against the cave mouths, effectively blocking them from intruders. At one side is a tree; from its lower branch depends a grapevine.

The rising curtain reveals SCAR CHEEK and YELLOW TOOTH in front of one of the caves. SCAR CHEEK is setting a flint axhead into a stick, and YELLOW TOOTH is scraping the marrow from a large bone. They are prehistoric creatures, with long matted hair and bare bodies, except where covered by the furred skins of animals. They are pigeon-toed, lumbering, muscular and round-shouldered. The man has a livid scar on one cheek and wears an unkempt beard. Four or five assorted children, attired like their elders, are playing near by with sticks, pebbles and river shells.

A loud, piercing scream is heard, and SCAR CHEEK and YELLOW TOOTH drop their tasks and look with animal quickness in the direction from which comes the sound. PINK WEED, a plump, girlish creature, pops from the cave entrance and joins her parents.

SCAR CHEEK (*peering off to the right*)
It sounds like the cry of Little Face.

YELLOW TOOTH (*peering*)
I do not see her. It was a cry of fear.

SCAR CHEEK
I see something dodging among the trees. It is a woman.

YELLOW TOOTH
If a beast is after her, why doesn't she climb a tree?

SCAR CHEEK (*sniffing*)
I smell no beast. But I have a cold.

YELLOW TOOTH (*sharply*)
I told you not to leave off that rabbit skin just because the sun was bright. Perhaps the next time you will listen to me! (*To the children*) Children! Come here! The Bugaboo Beast is coming! (*The children run to their mother, who bundles them off inside the cave, in front of which she stands, protectingly and defiantly.*)

SCAR CHEEK (*still peering*)
It is Little Face. She is in a tremendous hurry. Great hyena! Short Leg is pursuing her! What makes her run so fast—the blubbydub little fool! He will never catch her, and she runs exactly as if she did not want him to! A woman of *her* age!

YELLOW TOOTH (*watching the race*)
Oh, I hope she stubs her toe! No such luck! Short Leg falls behind!

SCAR CHEEK
If he would only throw his club at her! Blubbydub him for a fool! (*LITTLE FACE runs on from the right, panting. She darts to the cave entrance in front of which YELLOW TOOTH stands, and, pushing the latter aside, disappears within.*)

YELLOW TOOTH (*outraged*)
Well, of all things! Girls nowadays have no respect for their mothers! What are we coming to?
(GAB GAB and MUCH TALK appear from their caves and listen to the dispute.)

SCAR CHEEK
Well, she's *your* child, isn't she? Why didn't you club her more when she was little?

YELLOW TOOTH
Hush! Don't you see the neighbors listening?

SCAR CHEEK (*scornfully*)
That's women, all over. A man can't call his cave his own any more.
(SHORT LEG limps on from the right. He carries a club, is lame and a little out of breath.)

SHORT LEG
Well, she got away.

SCAR CHEEK (*with scorn*)
Of course she did, and is hiding in the cave. That was a fine blubbydub of a race you put up, I must say.

SHORT LEG (*puzzled*)
What does "blubbydub" mean?

YELLOW TOOTH (*proudly*)
It doesn't mean anything at all, but it *sounds* awful, doesn't it? Scar Cheek invented it one day when he hit his thumb with a flint.

SHORT LEG
You can't deny I *chased* Little Face, anyway. (*With a glance at the others*) And the neighbors saw me. So that makes us even for your saving me from that hyena. No longer can it be said that Little Face was never chased by a man!

PINK WEED (*with a giggle*)
But you didn't catch her!

SHORT LEG
No. Gratitude has its limits. I was afraid, once, I would. She stopped to sneeze! Now if it had been *you* I had been running after—

PINK WEED (*tossing her head*)
The man who knocks *me* in the head and wins my young affections will have to have both legs the same length. Why, I ran away from Round Arm himself; didn't I, mamma?

YELLOW TOOTH

You did, my child. But you knew perfectly well he would chase you again. And your sister may never have another chance. She makes men run the other way, with her ugly big eyes and small mouth and thin, long legs. Not that I don't advocate maidenly reserve. (*In a pleasant reverie*) When your father sneaked up on me and grabbed me by the ankle, I fancy he must have thought he'd caught a tree cat. I bit a hole clear through his hand and gave him his pretty scar with a piece of flint. He had to hit me on the head with a broken limb before I finally accepted him. (*With a sigh*) Ah, those were the days!

SCAR CHEEK (*sentimentally*)

When I felt her big yellow teeth meet in my hand, I thought to myself, "There's the only girl in the world for me!" (*He sighs.*) That was as many summers ago as I have fingers on my hands and feet.

SHORT LEG

Is she as old as that? Thank the sun I didn't catch her!

YELLOW TOOTH

How time flies! And Little Face is still a maiden! Such an old maiden!

GAB GAB (*to MUCH TALK*)

She says Little Face is an old maiden! Tee, hee!

MUCH TALK (*proudly*)

My man snared me with a looped thong when I was a mere child!

GAB GAB (*boasting*)

And my man dropped a rock on me while I was still too young to scoop marrow. Did you ever feel the bump? It is still there.

MUCH TALK

How you must treasure it!

YELLOW TOOTH (*to PINK WEED*)

Hear those women talk! Everybody knows how Much Talk got her man! The looped thong was set for a young

hippopotamus, and Lank Shin was openly disappointed when he found what he'd caught.

MUCH TALK

Oh! The liar!

PINK WEED (*maliciously*)

I've heard the rock that hit Gab Gab was dislodged by an earth tremble, and that Loose Lip says he's been sorry ever since he picked her up to keep the hyenas from getting her.

GAB GAB (*to YELLOW TOOTH*)

I'll thank you to make that stuck-up chit of yours keep her mouth out of other people's affairs!

YELLOW TOOTH (*with mock surprise and elaborate cordiality*)

Why, how d'ye do, Gab Gab? I never saw you at all! How nice of you and Much Talk to take your airing just as we were having company! Let me make you acquainted with Short Leg.

GAB GAB

Pleased to meet you.

SHORT LEG (*who does not shine as a society man*)

Well, I guess I'll be getting along.

YELLOW TOOTH (*effusively*)

What, already? Do stop and have a bite of cold marrow. Perhaps Gab Gab and Much Talk will join us. (*To PINK WEED*) Set out those white shells your papa got from the gentleman he brained down by the big river.

SHORT LEG (*with masculine aversion to the prehistoric equivalent of afternoon tea*)

No. I gotta be going.

GAB GAB (*viciously*)

I couldn't possibly eat any marrow, gorged as I am with *bird livers*. (*To MUCH TALK*) Weren't they *delicious*!

(*GAB GAB and MUCH TALK, with their broods, retire, noses in air, into their respective caves.*)

SHORT LEG (*going off*)

Good-bye. See you again some time.

SCAR CHEEK

Good-bye, old man; sorry you didn't catch Little Face.

SHORT LEG (*over his shoulder*)

I'm not.

(YELLOW TOOTH, *dropping her company manners, turns fiercely on SCAR CHEEK.*)

YELLOW TOOTH

You don't enter this cave again until you've snared enough birds to furnish us with livers for the rest of our born days. I felt so *ashamed!* The idea of your submitting me to such humiliation!

SCAR CHEEK (*mildly*)

How did I know you wanted bird livers? You never mentioned it.

YELLOW TOOTH

I didn't know I wanted them until those women started to brag. Did you notice how Gab Gab's fur hung? It was shocking.

SCAR CHEEK (*innocently*)

Yes. I noticed it.

YELLOW TOOTH (*blazing*)

You did, did you? Well, you'd better keep your eyes at home where they belong! Oh, I've watched your goings-on for a long time, and I'm sick of them. I'm going straight home to my mother's cave!

SCAR CHEEK (*hotly*)

That's better than bringing the old girl to *this* cave!

(*This bit of repartee has a remarkable effect on the pair. They stand, awed, as at a tremendous discovery, and finally their eyes meet.*)

SCAR CHEEK (*dazed and scratching his beard*)

Say! That's pretty good!

(*He suddenly bursts into a fit of laughter.*)

YELLOW TOOTH (*catching the contagion*)

He, he, he! "That's better than bringing *her* to *this* cave!" He, he, he! Oh, my bones and marrow!

(*They are both overcome with mirth.*)

SCAR CHEEK

And it popped out, just like that! You says: "I'm going home to my mother," and—haw, haw, haw! And I says— (*He is overcome by a brilliant idea.*) Pink Weed! Come here. (PINK WEED, *who has watched her parents with undisguised amazement, goes to her father.*) Now, you listen here. Your mother says to me: "I'm going home to my mother's cave." And I says— get this—I says: "That's better than bringing the old girl to *this* cave!" See? What you've got to do is this: You repeat that to your firstborn, when you get one, and have him repeat it to *his* firstborn, and so on. We mustn't lose that! Haw, haw!

(LITTLE FACE *enters timidly from the cave and looks about.*)

LITTLE FACE

Has—has Short Leg gone?

PINK WEED

Of course he has. Did you expect him to hang around waiting for you?

YELLOW TOOTH (*reproachfully*)

Oh, Little Face! Little Face! After all I've done for you! After all my toil and labor! How could you?

LITTLE FACE (*humbly*)

I didn't *want* to escape!

SCAR CHEEK

You took a mighty poor way of showing it. A streak of sky fire couldn't have caught up with you. What made you do it?

LITTLE FACE

It was my legs, I suppose. They are so long and carry me so fast! Oh, I *did* want to be caught! Truly I did! My blood surged hot, and there were bird sounds in my ears at the very idea of a man pursuing me, wanting me! Even a lame man with a bad breath. But just the same I was afraid and I had to run! Once I stopped. I trembled all over and waited for him to catch up. Then I heard the thump of his feet and something made me run again! Oh, I wish I were dead!

(*She throws herself on the ground, groveling in her humiliation.*)

PINK WEED (*like the spoiled favorite she is*)

I never acted like that, did I, mamma?

YELLOW TOOTH

Never, my child.

PINK WEED

When *my* time comes, I trust I may be depended upon to acquit myself satisfactorily.

LITTLE FACE (*sitting up*)

When my time comes again, I won't budge! I'll make myself stand still! And I won't struggle when I'm caught. (*Hugging herself rapturously*) I'll be so glad I can't!

(SCAR CHEEK goes deliberately up and selects a stone ax from the family assortment.)

SCAR CHEEK (*sternly*)

Little Face, come here.

YELLOW TOOTH (*alarmed*)

Would you *kill* her?

SCAR CHEEK

I ought to. The cave is overcrowded. She should be in a cave of her own with a man of her own. But I won't kill her. I will only crack her feet so that she cannot run away again.

(*He advances on LITTLE FACE, who cowers pitifully.*)

YELLOW TOOTH

Stop! Don't you see that no man would ever have her then? You would spoil her last chance!

SCAR CHEEK

Her last chance! Didn't you hear Short Leg? It was gratitude that made him pretend to chase her. He didn't want her. Who could, with her slender body and her little face and thin nose? Look at Pink Weed's beautiful nose! It spreads all over her face. Look at Pink Weed's mouth! There's a mouth for you! (*Flashing a look of scorn at the miserable LITTLE FACE*) Little mouth! Little waist! Little feet! Blubbydub! She must take after *your* people. She doesn't favor mine!

LITTLE FACE (*scrambling to her feet and desperately facing them*)

I'll show you all! No man wants me, you say? Well, men *shall* want me! I know what is within me. I know what feelings I have, what passions, what longings. But I have kept them to myself. Why, if men but knew—and they *shall* know! I'll get a man! Any man! Every man! You have seen the smoke of a tree stump that is on fire within. Well, watch my smoke!

(*An ominous roar is heard off at the right. It is distant but terrifying, and it momentarily petrifies the four. GAB GAB and MUCH TALK peer from their caves in terror. The roar is repeated.*)

SCAR CHEEK (*in a trembling voice*)

The Great Cave Tiger! He is back again after many suns! Men cannot fight the Great Tiger! (*He seizes YELLOW TOOTH and PINK WEED and pushes them into the cave. LITTLE FACE is about to enter, but he shoves her roughly away.*) Not you! There will be scant food for a long siege. I give you to the Tiger.

(*SCAR CHEEK goes into the cave, and the boulder is rolled against the mouth from within, blocking it.*)

LITTLE FACE, in a panic, seeks shelter in the next cave, but GAB GAB disappears within and a boulder is rolled against the entrance. LITTLE FACE makes a rush for the third cave, where she is also barred. There comes another roar, and the abandoned girl beats wildly on the rock with her naked fists. Then the inspiration of seeking shelter in the tree strikes her, and she climbs up with simian agility, by the grapevine, finally perching on the extending limb, breathless and relieved.

The roar is again heard, and CLICK KNEE, a skinny little runt of a man, staggers on from the right, in the last stages of terror. A musical call from LITTLE FACE, in the tree, causes him to start with new fright, but a second call attracts his attention to the girl. She is sitting gracefully with her feet hanging over and crossed at the ankles and her hands clutching the limb at her sides. She invites him to her perch with a beckoning toss of the head, and when he stands agape, she repeats the invitation.)

LITTLE FACE

You'd better hurry—or am I worse than the Tiger?

CLICK KNEE (*tremblingly*)

You are a star in the sky! (*He runs over to the tree trunk and attempts to climb as a bear would, but falls back.*) How did you get up? The trunk is so big!

LITTLE FACE

Climb by the vine.

(CLICK KNEE vainly attempts to do so, but falls back weakly.)

LITTLE FACE (*with contempt*)

You weakling! You worthless thing! Wrap the vine about you and I will draw you up. You can do that much, can't you?

(*Stung by her words, CLICK KNEE obeys, and helps himself feebly with his feet against the tree trunk, while the girl, with ridiculous ease, hauls him up to the limb. Once there, he collapses on his back, his shoulders supported by the perpendicular trunk and his body extended along the branch. LITTLE FACE squats, facing him.*)

CLICK KNEE (*wailing*)

The Tiger! The Great Cave Tiger!

LITTLE FACE

Did you see him? Did you smell him?

CLICK KNEE

No—no—I heard him! The terrible Tiger!

(*He babbles in weak terror.*)

LITTLE FACE (*turning her head and sniffing*)

He is not very near. I cannot smell him. But I could smell you before I saw you.

CLICK KNEE (*still babbling*)

The Tiger—the awful Tiger—

LITTLE FACE (*crooning over him like a mother over her child*)

Hush; the Tiger will not get you. (*She strokes his neck and arm.*) Do not be afraid. If we cannot smell the Tiger, he cannot smell us. He must be far

away, so do not be afraid, my little man— (*She starts suddenly, the significance of the last three words stunning her.*) My little man! Oh! (*Her caresses become more intense and she speaks feverishly.*) You came to this tree—my tree! And I drew you up to me! They said I could not get a man! (*She regards her prize critically.*) He isn't much—but I've got him!

(*She raises his limp arm and bites his hand.*)

CLICK KNEE (*sitting upright*)

Ouch!

LITTLE FACE (*gloating*)

He has feelings, this man of mine!

(*She again bites his hand, which he timidly withdraws.*)

CLICK KNEE (*bashfully*)

I suppose I ought to tell you—

LITTLE FACE

Tell me what, little man?

(*It is commencing to grow dark.*)

CLICK KNEE

I am called Click Knee. Two suns and a sleep away from here I have a cave—

LITTLE FACE (*delighted*)

I have found a man with a cave!

CLICK KNEE

There is a woman in it—

LITTLE FACE (*with a snarl of jealousy*)

A woman!

CLICK KNEE

Of course. And a lot of cubs. So many. (*He extends four fingers.*) Very soon there will be that many. (*He extends his thumb.*)

LITTLE FACE (*with a new respect for him as a father*)

This woman—is she nice?

CLICK KNEE (*with undiplomatic enthusiasm*)

Oh, yes! She has great hands and feet and a big mouth and—

LITTLE FACE (*with a cry of rage at his enumeration of virtues lacking in herself*)

Blubbydub! Blubbydub!! Blubbydub!!! (*Her mood changes, and she takes his hand, stroking her own arm with it.*) Is she as nice as I am?

CLICK KNEE (*after an inventory that does not especially appeal to him*)

She is much fatter and greasier and—

LITTLE FACE (*scrambling to her feet and kicking furiously at him*)

Get out of my tree—you puny little ape—get out of my tree!

CLICK KNEE (*cowering*)

But the Tiger!

LITTLE FACE (*calling*)

Here, Tiger, Tiger, Tiger! Here's a bone for you! (*To CLICK KNEE*) Let the Tiger have you! Do you think I saved you for that other woman?

CLICK KNEE (*upon whose feeble intelligence the situation tardily dawns*)

Wait! Wait! You did not let me finish. To the hyenas with the other woman!

LITTLE FACE (*squatting down again, eagerly*)

Yes—yes. To the hyenas with her!

CLICK KNEE (*rising to the occasion at last*)

She is too fat, and her mouth is too big! You are ever so much nicer!

LITTLE FACE (*throwing her arms about him*)

Oh! Little man!

CLICK KNEE (*clinging to his last shred of self-respect*)

Still, she is my woman, you know.

LITTLE FACE (*fiercely drawing off*)
Why don't you go to her then?

CLICK KNEE (*feeling that he has struck the right pace, and speaking with a thrill he begins to experience*)

Because of you, of course.

LITTLE FACE (*meeting him more than halfway*)

Because of me! She is your woman, you say, but you are my man! She lost you when you were helpless, at the foot of the tree. (*Fondling him in the rapidly growing darkness*) She lost you when I found you and saved you. And I saved you for myself!

CLICK KNEE (*still a little embarrassed*)
It is growing dark.

LITTLE FACE

What do we care? We are safe in the tree. The beasts are coming from their lairs, but we are safe. We must stay here till the Tiger goes. We must stay till the sun comes again.

CLICK KNEE (*whimpering*)

I wish the sun would not go away!

LITTLE FACE (*promptly seizing a convenient text*)

Listen: You cannot prevent the sun going away. You cannot stop the sun; you cannot stop the water from dropping from the sky, nor the cold feathers in the winter. They cannot be controlled, can they?

(*They can now barely be seen in the vanishing light.*)

CLICK KNEE

No, I suppose not.

LITTLE FACE

Then neither can the thrill within me be controlled. Oh, my little man! My little man!

(*A distant roar is heard.*)

CLICK KNEE

The Tiger again!

LITTLE FACE

Only the Tiger! It is a good Tiger! It is a sweet roar! It will keep the people in their caves where they cannot spy upon us.

(*It is now pitch dark.*)

SCENE II

The curtain rises again on the same scene, but now bathed in morning sunlight. So many suns and sleeps have elapsed since the first scene that all the fingers and toes in the family of SCAR CHEEK are insufficient to have kept track of them. It is now midsummer.

GAB GAB is discovered, sitting despondent and heavy-eyed on a great bone in front of her cave. MUCH TALK appears from her own cave, and looking casually about, sees GAB GAB.

MUCH TALK

What in the world are you sitting there in the chilly air for?

GAB GAB (*with a sob*)

Loose Lip did not come home last night. Some great beast must have devoured him.

MUCH TALK

Some beast? (*Significantly*) Tell me, are any furs missing from your cave?

GAB GAB (*staring at her in wonder*)

How did you guess? I can't find that fox skin anywhere!

MUCH TALK

Then no beast has Loose Lip. (*With a chuckle*) He has been snared by that creature in the great bear's cave.

GAB GAB (*agitated*)

Snared by the great bear!

MUCH TALK

No. The bear does not live there any more. He was driven away by a strange woman.

GAB GAB (*incredulously*)

A bear driven away by a woman! How you talk!

MUCH TALK (*excitedly*)

It is true! I heard about it by listening to the gossip of the men. She went there while the bear was away, and made a fire at the mouth of the cave by rubbing sticks, so that when the bear came back he was frightened away and went

to find another cave. And there the strange woman lives, protected by the fire that always burns.

GAB GAB

Nonsense! How could she get in and out of the cave?

MUCH TALK

She jumps through the fire so quickly that it does not burn her. And she lures our men to the cave and takes tributes of fur and meat from them.

GAB GAB

Snakes alive! How can the men get to her?

MUCH TALK

They go through the fire for her. That's the kind of woman she is!

GAB GAB

I don't believe it.

MUCH TALK

Listen: My man, Lank Shin, came home last night smelling of burnt hair. I made him own up. He had been lured to the strange woman's cave. He said it was the best furnished cave in the world, and fairly lined with furs. He recognized a lot of them. And he said the creature had smooth hair, mixed with weeds of the field, and had little circles of bone and flint dangling around her wrists and ankles. And she wore the most marvelously soft furs! But come to my cave and I'll make him tell you all about it.

GAB GAB (*surprised*)

Is Lank Shin still in the cave? So late?

MUCH TALK (*shortly*)

Yes. He isn't feeling very well this morning. I hit him with the leg bone of a buffalo, and it sort of discouraged him.

GAB GAB

I'll come. (*She stops suddenly and sniffs.*) Do you smell anything?

MUCH TALK (*sniffing*)

It smells like a man, and yet not quite like a man.

(Enter LOOSE LIP, rather limply, from the left. He sneaks on guiltily, and starts nervously when GAB GAB addresses him.)

GAB GAB *(sternly)*

Loose Lip, where have you been since the last sun and sleep?

LOOSE LIP

Well, you see, my dear, it was like this: I was—I was treed by a great fierce cat and—

GAB GAB

Treed by a cat? Why didn't the cat climb the tree, too?

(LOOSE LIP, caught in a clumsy lie, scratches his head and is dumb. GAB GAB approaches and smells of him suspiciously.)

GAB GAB *(with a wild scream)*

Burnt hair!

MUCH TALK *(chuckling)*

You need not interview my man, after all. Your man can tell you all about the strange woman.

(MUCH TALK goes into her cave. GAB GAB selects a small club from the assortment at hand, and starts to enter her cave.)

GAB GAB *(with an ominous calm)*

Loose Lip! You come here to me!

(She disappears, and LOOSE LIP, like a whipped cur, slinks into the cave after her. Enter, trippingly, from the SCAR CHEEK establishment, PINK WEED, followed more demurely by YELLOW TOOTH.)

YELLOW TOOTH

Your mother has had experience and knows, Pink Weed. The last time Round Arm chased you he did not seem to be quite as keen as usual. Better let him catch you the next time, or there's no telling. Perhaps you will become an old maiden, like your poor devoured sister.

(She begins to sob.)

PINK WEED *(scornfully)*

Still brooding over Little Face!

YELLOW TOOTH

I can't help it. She was my firstborn.

PINK WEED

Cheer up. I will let Round Arm catch me before another sleep. He is sure to be sneaking about in the glade, and when I see him I will run so slowly and stumble so that he could get me if he were a one-legged man.

YELLOW TOOTH

My own daughter! He is the best hunter and choicest prize in the neighborhood. All the girls are getting stiff-jointed with pretending to limp when they catch smell of him. But he has never chased anybody except you.

PINK WEED *(sniffing)*

There he is now! Never fear, mamma; I'll run slowly enough this time!

(She goes out. YELLOW TOOTH, her arms akimbo, stands watching her daughter, with a proud grin. SCAR CHEEK enters from the right, dragging a small, fur-bearing animal, dead, by the tail. He is well on before he observes YELLOW TOOTH, and stops.)

SCAR CHEEK

Hello, old girl. All your work done? Have you dug out that rhinoceros marrow? *(He approaches her and she sniffs of him.)* Not guilty. Nothing singed about me. I'm too old for that sort of business.

YELLOW TOOTH

Did you ever see the strange woman?

SCAR CHEEK

No.

YELLOW TOOTH

What is the secret of her power over men, I wonder?

SCAR CHEEK *(throwing the dead animal into the cave, and leaning against the boulder)*

Well, if you ask me, I suppose she coddles the men and flatters them into thinking that they are the finest ever—

YELLOW TOOTH

I've heard she dresses outrageously, with her body all but covered up, instead of bare and free like a modest woman.

SCAR CHEEK

It's getting serious. Why, after a while there won't be a decent fur skin left in the country. She'll have 'em all! (*A feminine wail is heard, off at the left.*) Hello! What's the row? Why, it's Pink Weed, and she doesn't look exactly happy.

(*PINK WEED enters, blubbing. She goes to her mother.*)

PINK WEED

Oh, mamma! It's all off!

YELLOW TOOTH

What is?

PINK WEED (*speaking between sniffs*)

I caught sight of Round Arm, and he caught sight of me. The way I pretended to run was a shame and a disgrace. I just *crept* along, looking back at him and smiling. Then suddenly a strange woman appeared between us. And Round Arm stopped short. So did I. The strange woman began to glide away, *looking back over her shoulder*, and Round Arm followed *her*! And I was forgotten. And he caught *her*!

(*PINK WEED breaks down and sobs on her mother's bosom.*)

YELLOW TOOTH

I told you and I warned you, but no, you wouldn't listen to your own mother. You have yourself to blame, and we'll have another leftover in the family!

SCAR CHEEK (*grimly selecting a stone ax*)

Not if I know it! I'll interview Round Arm and ask him what he means by it.

YELLOW TOOTH

You won't have long to wait. He is coming.

PINK WEED (*following the direction of her mother's gaze*)

And so is she!

(*ROUND ARM enters, with LITTLE FACE hanging affectionately to his arm. He is big and clean-cut, a veritable dandy among cavemen. LITTLE FACE has undergone remarkable changes since we last saw her. She is now a prehistoric fairy in the flesh.*)

Wild flowers are woven into her flowing tresses. She wears flint and bone bracelets and anklets, and a good deal less of her body is exposed than formerly. She wears a long fur apron before and another behind, caught together at the hip. A rude corsage of brilliant bird skins and garlands of flowers about her neck complete a highly captivating costume. She combines with her clinging, affectionate manner a proud and disdainful bearing.)

YELLOW TOOTH (*scandalized at her appearance, and not recognizing her*)

Great hippopotamus! How indecent! Why, she's all covered! (*She sniffs.*) And she smells like sweet weeds! (*Looking closer, she gives a little scream of recognition.*) Snakes alive! It is Little Face!

SCAR CHEEK

Little Face! (*Sternly and abruptly*) Young woman, take off those things! Where have you been all these suns and sleeps?

LITTLE FACE (*coldly*)

I'll not take them off. You gave me to the Tiger, and no longer have control over me. You told me to go get a man. Well, I obeyed you.

SCAR CHEEK

I did not tell you to get all the men there were! You've raised merry blubbydub. Let go of Round Arm.

PINK WEED (*from the shelter of her mother's bulk*)

Yes—you let go of Round Arm!

LITTLE FACE (*serenely*)

Certainly. (*She drops his arm and addresses him.*) Do you prefer that flat-nosed, commonplace little lump of shapeless fat, or do you prefer me?

ROUND ARM (*sentimentally*)

How can you ask?

(*He throws an arm about her.*)

SCAR CHEEK (*hotly*)

See here! What do you mean by this, after chasing my daughter the way you have?

ROUND ARM

True, I chased one daughter—and I caught another. Do you want me to take them both? (*Magnificently*) Very well; I am willing.

SCAR CHEEK (*astounded*)

What! Take them both?

ROUND ARM

Certainly. Why not?

SCAR CHEEK (*in an awed tone*)

There stands a brave man!

PINK WEED

I won't have it so! I hate Little Face, and—and I'm afraid of her.

LITTLE FACE (*with an imperious laugh*)

All women are afraid of me! You and all the others who used to jeer at me. It is because I am so much wiser than you, who only know how to run away from men. I have discovered how to run *after* them, and *get* them. I will teach you something. Ask Round Arm why he prefers me to you.

ROUND ARM (*bursting with ideas he finds it hard to express*)

It is because—well, because a slender body is better than rolls of fat—and a large bright eye and a small pink mouth are—well, different.

SCAR CHEEK (*with clarified amazement*)

What put all those notions into your head?

ROUND ARM (*with a little start of realization*)

Come to think of it, Little Face pointed them out to me, just now. (*With the enthusiasm of imparting sensational news*) Do you know, she wets herself with water, after every sleep. I'm going to try it myself—some day.

PINK WEED (*shuddering*)

Horrible! But she would do anything—she who belongs to all men!

LITTLE FACE

You are wrong. I belong to no man at all. It is nice to please people; and the people whom I please sometimes please me. And these bring me meat and marrow and furs. But those who do not please my fancy I drive away, with their presents. I pick and choose and no man calls me captive, while I have all the willing captives I crave. (*Contemptuously*) Here, take your Round Arm. Keep him—if you can. (*With an arch smile at the young man*) He will find my cave soon enough, I fancy.

(*She looks upon them with contempt and goes out like a queen. All gaze after her, awed and open-mouthed.* PINK CHEEK slips over to ROUND ARM, cuddling against him.)

CURTAIN



SON (*looking up from his book*)—Pa, what are diplomatic relations?

FATHER (*with a glance at his wife's mother*)—Those that can live together in peace, my son.



COQUETTE—A woman without any heart who makes a fool of a man who hasn't any head.

THE WIND

By Victor Starbuck

I AM the Wind.

I blow through all the world, and go among the ways of men on silent feet.
Where the first leaves twinkle on the trees, there am I;
Where the dead grass rustles in the brown field, I am present;
I stir the impalpable dust in the long road that leads to Nineveh or Babylon;
I roll the green waves betwixt shore and shore of the Atlantic;
Where men go down to the sea in ships, it is I who bear them.
Yea, I swept on their way the galleys of Rome and the triremes of Græcia;
Yet it was I that wrecked the war galleys of Antony, and hurled the Invincible
Armada hell-crashing to its doom.

Lo, it is I that bring the rain in time of drought, that sweep away the clouds after
the storm,
That blow up the warm south in the spring, that bear cool flagons to the parched
lips of summer.

From the beginning to the end, I am the friend and companion of man:
I caress the first soft hair upon the head of the newborn babe;
I waft the toy ships of the growing child across the pond;
I blow wisps of the beloved's hair across the face of her lover, and engender in
them the primal impulse, the ultimate passion;
And at the end of all, I smooth the fresh earth upon the new grave, and sow
thistles and grass upon it.

I am the hurricane, the typhoon and the tornado; but I talk to the grass in
whispers;
I croon to the growing grain, and pipe softly in the river reeds at dusk of day.
I blow through the unswept room, and with the dust motes thereof I transform
the entering sunbeam into a thing of unspeakable splendor.
I bring health and happiness and disease and death.
I carry the reek of cankering battlefields through thronged cities and spread the
fiery pestilence;
But I bear health and strength to the consumptive, to the tired mother, to the
neglected child.
I am the Great Leveler, for I mingle together the dust of princes and beggars, the
martyr and the forger and the libertine.

I am as old as life and death; I am contemporary with all things.
I am everywhere; I am eternal; I am the breath of God: I am the Wind.



WHEN people are very, very good, it seems unreasonable to expect them to be agreeable also.

LE DEVOIR?

Par Jacques Nayral

LE devoir? Ah! qu'il est aisé à ces bavards de moralistes de dire: "Faites votre devoir, en tout temps, en tout lieu." Mais où donc est-il, le devoir?

Le père Loriou, comme nous appelions le vieux Commandant retraité, laissa tristement échapper un soupir.

— Oh! vous, Commandant, dis-je, je suis bien sûr . . .

Il m'interrompit:

— Non, mon ami, ne soyez pas sûr! Saiton jamais?

Un brouillard humide troublait ses prunelles. Je devinai qu'un souvenir très ancien et très douloureux emplissait son cœur, et je n'osais l'interroger quand, soudain, comme s'il eût pris le parti de se soulager une bonne fois, il me conta:

— Tenez, je vais tout vous dire. Cela me fera du bien que quelqu'un soit là pour me dire que ce ne fut pas tout à fait ma faute, que je me suis trompé, qu'on m'a trompé . . . enfin, n'importe! Et vous verrez, mon enfant, vous verrez comme il est aisé souvent de faire le mal, comme il faut se garder, se garder de tout ce que les autres disent, et réfléchir, et consulter son cœur, oui, son cœur, toujours, avant sa raison.

Enfin, voici. Quand j'étais sous-officier de hussards, j'avais pour camarade un charmant jeune homme, un fils de famille, Raoul de Lussac, engagé parce qu'il ne pouvait subir la tyrannie du collège, et qui comptait conquérir l'épaullette, comme moi, fils de paysan, à la pointe de l'épée. Inutile de dire que ce beau garçon, riche et élégant, portant à ravir notre coquet uniforme, ravageait les cœurs dans la petite ville de X . . . où nous étions en garnison.

Malheureusement, il fit la connaissance d'une jeune fille, de condition modeste, mais parfaitement honorable, et c'est ici que commence la lamentable aventure . . .

Elle était belle, cela va sans dire. S'en fût-il soucié sans cela? Mais elle était aussi chaste que belle, et, quoiqu'elle écoutât Raoul avec complaisance, il n'en obtint jamais que des lettres passionnées et des rendez-vous platoniques, sans plus. Il m'avait fait son confident, et, je le dis à ma honte, je le raillais sur le peu de succès de son entreprise.

Un jour, il me dit: "Eh bien, crois-tu? Je lui ai juré formellement que je l'épouserai. — Et? — Et rien, mon cher. Rien avant le mariage. C'est une vertu irréductible. — Alors, conseillai-je, n'insiste pas. Tu n'aurais même pas dû . . . — Que veux-tu? j'en ai pris mon parti. Assez d'autres jolies filles me consolent de mon échec. Hélène (vous ai-je dit qu'elle s'appelait Hélène?) Hélène, vois-tu, ce sera mon amour platonique, la poésie de mon existence. Cet amour épuré me repose des autres plus . . . moins . . . aériens. — Alors? — Alors, je continue. Promenades sentimentales, épîtres incendiaires. — Et promesse de mariage? — Et promesse de mariage, naturellement. Je joue mon rôle sérieusement. — Peut-être ferais-tu bien, réitérai-je . . . — D'en rester là? Tu plaisantes? Je veux voir combien cela durera."

Hélas! cela dura trois ans . . .

Raoul et moi, nous étions devenus officiers. Envoyés, lui dans l'Est, moi au Sud, nous nous écrivions régulièrement. Mon ami me parlait quelquefois d'Hélène avec qui, disait-il, il entretenait toujours une correspondance

amoureuse. Dans mes réponses, je le suppliais de cesser ce jeu dont j'entrevois le danger et aussi, du côté de Raoul, la perversité. Mais il ripostait par des railleries à l'adresse des petites bourgeoises qui rêvent d'un Prince Charmant.

Enfin, il m'invita à son mariage. Il épousait Mlle. de X . . . , fille d'un général qui portait un des grands noms de l'armorial.

Ce fut à la cour d'assises que j'allai. Trois jours avant la noce, Hélène, d'un coup de pistolet, avait tué net le faiseur de faux serments.

Vous dire, mon ami, combien de fois je me reprochai de n'avoir pas été assez ferme pour empêcher Raoul de poursuivre cette intrigue, combien de fois je m'accusai d'être responsable de ce drame, c'est impossible. Pourtant, ce n'est pas cela le plus affreux.

Cité comme témoin, je n'avais pas, par respect pour la mémoire du malheureux, montré au juge d'instruction des lettres de Raoul, que j'aurais dû cent fois détruire, lettres horribles, dans lesquelles il me parlait de ses amours avec Hélène d'une façon qui ne laissait aucun doute sur les sentiments que lui inspirait cette intrigue dérisoire. Mais l'avocat se douta que j'avais des documents. Il vint me dire: "Vous étiez l'ami intime du lieutenant de Lussac; vous savez, il a dû vous dire, vous écrire qu'il se moquait d'Hélène. S'il vous l'a écrit, monsieur, montrez les lettres. C'est le seul moyen de fournir une excuse décisive à l'acte de ma cliente, et de la faire acquitter. Vous avez sa vie entre vos mains, monsieur; j'ai confiance que vous saurez faire votre devoir."

J'écoutai cet homme, par qui parlaient tous les préjugés, toutes les sottes conventions sociales, et c'est le remords de ma vie.

Hélène avait tué par jalousie, pour que Raoul ne fût pas une autre. Elle l'avait cru, sur ses dires, victime du préjugé aristocratique, contraint par ses parents d'épouser une fille de son rang, qu'il n'aimait pas, et désespéré de devoir y consentir. Quand elle m'entendit à l'audience, sur l'invitation de son avocat, lire les affreuses lettres dans les-

quelles son fiancé—car il était son fiancé, devant la conscience—bafouait impitoyablement son amour, elle se dressa, blanche, les yeux dilatés par l'horreur, la main crispée sur sa poitrine, écoutant jusqu'au bout, dans un effort de volonté surhumain. Quand ce fut fini, elle se tourna vers moi, en crachant ces mots: "Vous êtes un misérable!" et elle s'évanouit.

Que se passa-t-il ensuite? Je n'en sais rien. J'errai, anéanti, à travers le palais de justice. Soudain j'entendis des cris, des applaudissements, des huées. "Acquittée, elle est acquittée," disaient des voix: et les unes ajoutaient: "Vivent les jurés!" d'autres: "C'est honteux." Je comprenais, à travers la rumeur, qu'on me considérait comme la cause de l'acquittement. Je m'enfuis, pour échapper à la foule.

Je me trouvais dans un couloir. Entre deux gendarmes, une femme passa. C'était elle. Ecrasé, éperdu, je m'avançai; j'aurais voulu lui demander pardon. Elle s'écarta brusquement, comme si elle eût aperçu une bête repoussante, et ses lèvres sifflèrent ce seul mot: "Vous!"

— Oh! Commandant, protestai-je; vous l'aviez sauvée.

Il reprit, et sa voix s'animait.

— Vous aussi? Vous dites comme les autres? Sauvée, oui, je l'avais sauvée, de quoi? De la prison, du bagne peut-être? Et tout ce qu'il y avait en elle de beau, de grand, toute la pureté de son amour, l'aurole qu'elle avait mise au front de son amant, la foi inviolable qu'elle avait en lui, le culte qu'elle lui gardait au fond d'elle-même, toutes ces choses nobles, sacrées, divinement chastes, que j'avais flétries, foulées aux pieds, salies, brisées à jamais? J'avais donc bien fait de commettre cette ignominie? Et le bagne ne valait-il pas mieux, cent fois mieux, que cet enfer que je lui avais mis dans le cœur?

Le père Lorigou s'arrêta. Une larme roula le long de sa joue.

— Elle n'en est pas morte. Et voilà quarante ans, mon enfant, quarante ans qu'elle souffre, et que je souffre, moi aussi, parce que je n'ai pas su, ce jour-là, que notre meilleur, notre seul conseiller, c'est notre cœur.

THE (FOOT) LIGHTS O' LONDON

By George Jean Nathan

THERE are three, and only three, ways in which this particular review properly, accurately, may and should be begun. They are as follows:

1. The plays current in London at the time of writing are, with trifling exception, melancholy contributions to modern dramatic literature.

2. At the time of writing, the plays current in London, with trifling exception, are melancholy contributions to modern dramatic literature.

3. With trifling exception, melancholy contributions to modern dramatic literature are the plays current in London at the time of writing.

Therefore, let us proceed in a fourth way. To wit: What about the philosophy of women's clothes as visited upon us by Mr. Edward Knoblauch in his most recent play at the Royalty, "MY LADY'S DRESS"—one of the two worst of this talented author's theatrical works, a labor that measures weakly, almost absurdly, with his brilliant "Faun" and his shimmering "Kismet"?

It appears that Knoblauch is now indignant over modern woman's love of gauds, and prays to dissuade her from her silken passion by painting for her the dank miseries and eye-dimming nights and starving bellies that must contribute to the weaving and making of but a single gown briefly to be worn and as quickly to be tossed aside. Mr. Knoblauch is very much affected over the business and, upon the ultimate curtain of his stage traffickings, preaches a toothsome sermon through his abjuring heroine to the effect that "if women only knew, etc." Not that this question of women's clothes matters to me in the least (although I am a bachelor), yet

it somehow occurs to me that the hallucination pervading the situation (an hallucination born of Anglo-Saxon man's conglobated sentimentality) ought, in all justice to helpless women, be dismembered.

In the very first place, should not women's dress be a matter for as much artistic concern to an authentically civilized community as, let us say, its picture galleries and its orchestras? These, too, economically, are, at their bottoms, merely extravagances and relatively useless, and behind their geneses and separate institutions grin tragedies deep and considerable, at least tragedies of the avoidupois hinted at by the gesticulating Mr. Knoblauch.

Ponder, for instance, on the miseries that in every probability would repose in the biography of some tube of oil that went into the creation of a Velasquez, in the biography of the oboe that assisted Scarlatti to pioneer the later day orchestral glories of Beethoven. Conceive the tragedy back of every stretch of orchestral gut—animal pain and slaughtered death; of the underpaid human sweat that goes into the manufacture of the various parts of a French horn. Thuswise might a silly soul grow dizzy and sobby analyzing, were he to analyze in the current manner of the once cool Knoblauch.

The latter shows several groups of persons making their honest living out of silkworm culture, embroidering, weaving, fur gathering, artificial flower manufacture, dressmaking and the like, and then deduces his moral of women's wrongful extravagance from the highly relevant circumstances that the fur gatherer's wife deceived him, that the

maker of the artificial flowers was a poor hunchback whom nobody loved, that the silkworm man's sweetheart had not been loyal to him, and so on. Of course, Mr. Knoblauch's customers are not expected to reason things out in the manner which I have here perpetrated. Mr. Knoblauch, via the play bill, announces to these customers that he will demonstrate to them the tragedies that go into the making of a woman's expensive gown, and endeavors to convert them by unconsciously presenting to their vision catastrophes that have no bearing whatever upon the case in point. (But I wander: I find I have been reviewing a play, which is certainly no thing for any modern play reviewer to do.)

The entire rumpus over *les robes des dames*, the entire objection to the alleged useless prodigality which the purchase of beautiful finery is supposed to involve, is sponsored by those men who, in their complete stupidity, fail to catch, first (see Hume *et al.*), the sound esthetic values derived from such extravagance (civilization is the science of making ugly things beautiful); second, the psychophysics of dress and the vital bearing on the important question of that element in the advancement of civilization called romantic love (see Schopenhauer, Nietzsche *et al.*); and third, the sound organic economics resident in the whole process of this particular so-called squandering (see any practical statistician, which excludes, of course, several of the most widely quoted writers on economics). Why one woman should be sprayed with obloquy for throwing away money to keep alive the divers persons whose labors go into the creation of a fine dress and another be named blessed for throwing away money to keep alive the divers persons who persist on charity (common beggars, alleged "musical prodigies," paralytics, struggling "artists" and the like) is something apart from our meager reasoning faculties. Why the art of beautiful dress should be discouraged and the art of beautiful furniture encouraged, I can't entirely comprehend. Why beautiful paintings? Is such art of one-hun-

dredth the practical, love-luring, race-breeding economic and social value of the stimulating art of women's apparel? Why denounce the modiste and hail the florist, revile the milliner and pæan the candy butcher? We haven't any sense of values, we Anglo-Saxons. No wonder the civilized nations of the world, the French, the Austro-Hungarians and the developing Germans, laugh at us.

There have been numerous objections, on the part of the less intelligent British critics, to the structure of Mr. Knoblauch's play. They have observed that, as the body of the play is made up of one-act plays that are perfectly independent of one another, interest in the dramatic fabric as a whole is not and cannot be sustained. As in all similar cases where objection is lifted against a novel specimen of play construction, it is here not the form of construction that is at fault or found wanting, but the materials within the construction. Mr. Knoblauch's string of one-act plays which go to make up the "dream" portion of his drama are dull and conventional one-act plays. The fact that they have no relation one to another would not count in the slightest were they separately worth listening to. Good drama must almost always, out of the very nature of the things of life, be episodic. The substantial weakness of Mr. Knoblauch's theme (the point I have endeavored to indicate in the beginning of this review) is no more clearly to be tracked down than in the dexterous Mr. Knoblauch's own inability to inject into it a coherent reasonableness. Indeed, in the epilogue to his play, the author (having himself noticed in the late course of his work the vapidness of his argument) excuses himself by causing one of his protagonists to admit that what applies to the case of women's dress applies also to almost every other case under the sun.

All in all, a tawdry piece of work to the discredit of one who is one of the few imaginative writers for the English-speaking theater of the moment. Knoblauch's new play was the play I wanted first to see in all London, for I felt that here anyway might my long theatrically-

dormant imaginative powers be called again into action. I went to my chair with a stomach full of anticipatory smiles. I closed my eyes and promised myself several pages of eulogy of Knoblauch. And then, leaving my chair two and one-half hours later, I found that my imagination had not once been coaxed out of its skull. So, to tickle it, if only a trifle (realizing it was in London and out for a good time), I took it back to my hotel with me and let it read a Berlin-produced play by the German, Rittner, called "Der Mann im Souffleur Kasten" or "The Man in the Prompter's Box." The leading roles in "MY LADY'S DRESS" are occupied by a competent actor named Mr. Dennis Eadie and by the most incompetent but best-looking actress in London, Miss Gladys Cooper. Of the two performances, therefore, Miss Cooper's impressed me the more. In this, I was like the rest of the audience.

Mr. Alfred Sutro, as a maker of plays, somehow generally gives me the impression of a young dramatic critic: a young dramatic critic, as has been noted, being usually inclined to throw his education around and to concern himself assiduously with being witty. Back of Sutro's work one feels always strain; back of Sutro's wit one feels frequently irrelevance. I know little about the gentleman save from a contemplation of his numerous plays. For all I know, he may be of soundly trained, well turned, smartly shined mind. He probably is. If he were not, in all probability his plays would ring truer, his humor trickle forth more spontaneously. It is one of the saddest of human paradoxes that the work of thoroughly educated men should have about it a surface tone of artificiality, of something forced and not naturally flowing, where the work of the spuriously trained should have about it a becoming "naturalness" and mark of sincerity. I have often tried to figure the thing out—in vain. Why should, for instance, the plays of Shaw give persons the impression of being stiffly posed and painstakingly witty and the plays of such a comparatively inferior intelligence as Mr. Hubert Henry Davies (to pick the first at hand from

many) seem perfectly the reverse? Probably education makes a man unduly self-conscious.

And, after all, what makes a man more "human" than ignorance, and more "natural"? Why should Shaw's Bluntschli and Burgess, eliciting laughter with the celebrated theatrical trick of word reiteration (Arnold Bennett's pastime!) seem to many mere puppets as compared with the "humanness" of Davies' Mrs. Gorringer and the Jardines doing the same thing? Particularly as they must realize that, intrinsically, it is Davies' characters that are actually the puppeteer of the two sets. Why should the "Magic" of Chesterton (a work of considerable charm) impress its auditors in part as "a muddle of philosophy and infantile affectation" (I quote W. L. George) and any similarly to be classed play of Barrie's (assuredly a less wise soul) impress its auditors as "so human," "so natural"? I believe these latter are the usual tributes in the Barrie instance. Nor, I admit, undeserved tributes. Here, in general, a subject for our essayists—if we had any.

Sutro's workshop has lately emitted a brace of plays, "The Two Virtues," an earnestly stale farce comedy of the mid-Pinero period and manner, and "THE CLEVER ONES," current, as I write, at Wyndham's. A happy and promising first act in the latter piece is followed by two conventional acts relieved only at widely separated intervals by something legitimately provocative of either stomach or cerebellum pleasures. Of story, the play trains on the troubled maneuvers of a respectable young man to pose as an anarchist before the young woman of his heart in order to satisfy the latter's passion for something exciting and out of the common. The best moments in the play center upon the "twist" in Act I where the young man, still shouting defiance to law and order so his sweetheart may be impressed, confesses in a whisper to the girl's irate, frothing father that he is just an ordinary peaceable fellow in the brewing business; and upon a scene in Act II where, in an effort to disillusionize his beloved as to emmagoldmanism, the

young man invites her to an anarchist dinner at which his valet, decked out as a bomb thrower, and a real live anarchist hired for the occasion for five bob, are the *pièces de résistance*. A pleasantly turned moment is provided in the last act in a scene between the girl's father and the young fellow. The girl has decided she loves another; so has the young man. "You know," confides the father to the latter, "I'm sort o' sorry I'm not going to have you for a son-in-law. Oh, it isn't that the other fellow isn't all right—he is—but you and I could get along so well together. I'll miss you. You know—you know how it is—you're the kind I could kick under the table." An innocent, open-eyed little play containing a measure of humor and a double measure of patent theatricality. In a word or two, moderately pleasant and wholly unimportant. Mr. Gerald du Maurier is a cajoling figure in the first role and Miss Marie Löhr (she whom our Miss Billie Burke so insistently imitates) as engaging as ever in the part of the usual "sensible, housewifely" girl who wins the leading man away from the usual flighty blonde.

I shall devote small space to the presentation of "PYGMALION" at His Majesty's, having proceeded at some length into the substance of the play when, several months ago, it was placed on view at our German theater in Irving Place, New York. Seldom have I seen a play so distorted, so ignorantly performed and devastatingly strutted, as in the British case of this intrinsically droll effort. Providing a splintered imitation of Henry Ainley in the Bennett piece at the Kingsway, Beerbohm Tree, a once fairly effective but always grossly overestimated actor, gurgles, chews and swallows his way through the text like a rank amateur or a professional *matinée* idol. Mrs. Patrick Campbell, now an old woman, teases and strokes the role of the young Cockney wench with the remnants of the wiles of what histrionic prowess she is alleged at one time to have possessed but, of course, is unable to make convincing headway. (Had Mrs. Campbell been a homely woman, I

wonder if anyone, at any time in her career, would have believed her an actress?) The support is, in the main, as aggravating and unintelligible as are the principles. The exhibition in its entirety is a vivid object lesson in how really far bad acting on the part of actors regarded as good actors can go.

I have heard that Mr. Shaw personally cast and supervised the staging of his play. So far as the casting of Mrs. Campbell is concerned, I can readily understand George's action. I am quite sure that had I written "PYGMALION" and had so personable a beauty as Mrs. Pat said to me: "Oh, George, *please* let me play the role of Eliza," I should not only have beseeched the lady to play Eliza, but should have begged her as well to play the opposite role of Dr. Higgins. It wouldn't matter to me in the slightest that the splendid beauty could not act. Not in the slightest! No more, indeed, than it did to George Shaw. Nor would it be merely, as you imagine—you old dunce!—personal vanity or the flattery of thrilling eyes that would cause me (or probably caused George Shaw) to take the action. Art is one thing; acting is another; and beauty is still another. And it is good looks—not art, not acting—that draws folks to the box office and subsequently causes them legitimately to be affected more deeply than in the presence of finished histrionism with an ugly mug. Accordingly, "PYGMALION" with Mrs. Pat is a huge financial success.

I find that I experience more difficulty trying to understand why the movement of the play should be so tedious, in the light of Mr. Shaw's personal direction. In fact, I can't understand it at all. Consequently, although I violate one of the first rules of dramatic criticism in so doing, I shall refrain from pretending that nothing baffles me and from proceeding into a profound solution of the situation.

Every once in so often some playwright addresses himself to achieve again the spirit and romance of Meyer Förster's "Alt Heidelberg," and every once in so often the tilter comes unhorsed from the tourney. The latest

gentleman to be unseated is Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, whose play, "THE GREAT GAMBLE," met the eye at the Haymarket. Imagine "Brown of Harvard" written by J. M. Barrie and Henry Arthur Jones in collaboration, and then imagine a criticism of such a play written by Brander Matthews for the theatrical department of one of our popular uplift magazines, and you will have, in your conception of the *criticism*, an electrically accurate idea of Mr. Jerome's play. It is an odd circumstance that most writers for the theater who essay to translate into drama the reminiscent spirit of youth and youth's by-gone loves and dreams in a university atmosphere think entirely to accomplish their end with student songs at periodic intervals off left, with more or less jocose allusions on the part of the returned oldsters to one another's bald spots, increasing avoirdupois and rheumatism, and with sentimental reflections bearing upon "you remember, the one with the golden hair and blue eyes; Kathie—wasn't that her name?" . . . "Ah, yes, ah, yes, I remember. Poor dear little Kathie, I wonder what has become of her? (*Sadly*) But such is life; such—is—life!"

What is Jerome's trouble? When not writing for the stage, as spontaneously comic and clear-eyed a fellow as one might meet at the round table; when writing for the stage, a clergyman of the pearly tear, a packer of lard, a Charles Rann Kennedy with one foot on the brass rail. What a pity! Jerome has in him wit and humor; he can toy aptly and adroitly with the Queen's English; and both imagination and fancy are in some measure his portion. Has the stage (Lorelei of so many modern talented writers) wrecked him on its miraged rocks of royalties?

Even when Jerome fails, however, he does not fail entirely. Thus, for example, the first five and last five minutes of his newest play possess considerable charm. The scene, an ancient grove at dawn in the purlieu of Heidelberg, deserted, still. Through the trees and shrubbery that half conceal a marble statue of Venus, one hears, very faintly—almost doesn't

hear—a soft piping of some once familiar but somehow now forgotten melody. The song of love. Young Robin, returning to Heidelberg, hears it as again he meets the pretty little Elsa, his sweetheart of university years ago—and the pretty little Elsa hears it, too. Then comes a time of misunderstanding, of unhappiness, of separation—and the melody dies away. Moonlight eventually silvers the grove, and the dejected young fellow makes to leave behind him forever Heidelberg and its days of dear youth and Elsa. With him, ready to go back to their drabber lives in the world beyond the grove, are several students of other times, now grown gray and old.

Suddenly the pipes are heard again, faintly whispering among the leaves. Robin steps back from the departing group and listens. "Hurry," calls one of the old fellows to him. "Hurry!" Robin stands still. "Do you hear?" he asks. "Hear?" grumbles the ancient; "Hear what?" And then—to his old cronies: "Do you hear anything?" No, they hear nothing. And they prepare to take the strangely acting youngster by the arm and lead him with them. When—"Leave him," says the old Colonel; "he hears it just as we used to hear it when we were his age. We can't hear it any more, we old boys, but it's singing there among the trees just the same as always." And presently the curtain falls. Thus, too, for example, a trace of the old Jerome wit in the retort of a cross-examined man who has run away for an absurd platonic junket on the Continent with his best friend's wife, to the question as to whether they had, at the various hotels at which they had stopped, taken separate rooms: "Yes, where it didn't excite vulgar comment."

Let Jerome write what tiresome plays he will (ten minutes of charm and one gay joke do not constitute an engaging two and one-half hours), yet there remains still about his work one encouraging and winning quality. Let him, as in "THE GREAT GAMBLE" (the "great gamble" is marriage, according to this vicious anti-platitudinarian!), give us a mother with a "past" (a Wil-

son Barrett kind of past, with repentance that closes its eyes, shudders and grasps at tables, as one of the British boo-bund has phrased it), and such like persistent and undismayed rubbish, and still there remains something soothing about his labors. I speak of the man's admirably cool snobbery in the matter of tried and true—and so often correspondingly tedious—"dramatic technique." Jerome writes his plays with all the spontaneous bounce of the fresh-minded, clean-eared, progressive amateur. They have that most excellent and vivid form which the professors name formlessness. They are alive with the reasonable, irrational movement of life. In them, nothing of that precisely elegant, elaborately exact (and now so futile, so ridiculous) minuet movement clung to by the poor little Bernsteins and Sydney Grundys of the theater. Too bad Jerome has not ideas to put into his pleasurable lack of stuffed technique. In general, give me a so-called technically unpolished, amateurishly built play like Chesterton's recent effort, or give me a fresh, new playwright like Robert Elson with the idea he brought out in a so-called technically amateurish manner in his "Account Rendered," or give me a man with fun and notions like Karl Ettlinger, have he technique or no technique, and a thousand Charles Kleins are yours!

Now "Mr. Wu," the Anglo-Chinese melodrama by Messrs. Vernon and Owen, which has been regaling the Strand Theater's customers for many months. Says the *Saturday Review*: "It is the worst play in London; so incredibly bad that it exercises over one's imagination the fascination of a thing miraculous and inexhaustible." Says old Dr. J. T. Grein in the *Sunday Times*: "It provides an evening of more than fleeting importance; the play will be remembered; its exotic flavor is not merely a product of the theatrical greenhouse; it has a character of its own, a backbone of knowledge." You may pay your money and take your choice. Or, if you happen to be a professional critic, you may take your choice without paying your money. Have you all voted? Well, let us see.

The count stands one hundred to one in favor of the *Saturday Review*, Mr. Grein having voted for himself. "Mr. Wu" puts one in mind of Sardou in a kimono selling tickets at the box office window. The smell of the price of a seat percolates through the stage traffic from first curtain to final. And yet—and yet—as has been noted, the play is so bravely bad that it holds one rapt, enchanted. Much after the manner of Mr. Locke's "Case of Becky."

Many persons make the mistake of believing a moderately good play can engross one's attention more certainly than a completely bad play. A mistake, quite obviously. I doubt if there be anything so enthralling for the moment as utter imbecility, boldly, beautifully unconscious of its imbecility. By token of this point of view, is not 10-20-30 melodrama actually more beguiling while in movement than certain plays artistically and intrinsically by many leagues such melodrama's superior? Is not, actually, such a preposterous marriage of nonsenses as "The Whip" more hypnotic than a play of the moderately worthy aspect of, say, "Beauty and the Barge"? One hesitates to admit, but is it none the less true? I recall once having seen a performance of the musical comedy called "The Mocking Bird" (it was back in 1902 or 1903) with a number of the principal actors in the cast dead drunk, yet going through their vocal and lingual antics with a grim and stolid seriousness; and never, I may tell you, have I been held in so absolute a condition of fascination by a piece soberly performed. And who has not been caught firm in one's tracks by some crazy street corner orator where the lecture of some moderately sane college professor—on the same subject—has driven one frothing and hatless into the night?

The first act of the play is of what is known as the "establishing of atmosphere" species, which, in a play of this kind, is to say a commixture of incense, sunsets, perfumed verbosity, some wistaria scenery, some red and green costumes embroidered with gold dragons, and an enormous amount of bad acting. The act consumes more than half an

hour articulating one sentence to the effect that Mr. Wu's daughter has been betrayed by Mr. Gregory's son. The balance of the evening does with the scheming of Wu to revenge himself on the house of Gregory via the Mrs. The latter he "lures" to his dimly lighted den and, after causing all the doors to be locked, prepares to sardou the lady. Of course, he does not succeed, otherwise the play might be original. With Wu lying dead on the floor from a draught of poisoned tea (thus has the dagger of our grandfathers, the papercutter of our fathers and the hatpin of today been adapted into Chinese), and with the Mrs. making her escape from those awful walls, the piece comes to an end. In a purely Grand Guignol fashion, this last act, through the inclusion of one small ingredient, might be made over into a thriller of tremendous theatrical effect, but the authors have evidently overlooked the seemingly evident piece of business. Mr. Matheson Lang plays Wu in the ludicrously conventional "composed," "imperturbable" manner which has become part and parcel of the stage delineation of all Orientals save Japanese valets (who are always shown as comedy characters with a penchant for repeating "thanks velly much," which not one of the ten Japanese valets who have been in my personal employ nor any I have seen about the boudoirs of my friends has ever shown the slightest inclination toward). Miss Lillian Braithwaite as the Mrs., in what is projected as the big scene of the exhibit, behaves histrionically like the lion in the Paul Rainey African hunt moving pictures just as it is about to be shot.

Mr. Zangwill is at it again. This time it is called "PLASTER SAINTS." The scene of battle is the Comedy Theater. Zangwill is the William Jennings Bryan of the drama. Let him have a basically sound idea, and in ten minutes he will have contrived to talk that basically sound idea into a basically unsound idea. The virtuosity of the man in this direction is simply amazing. With Zangwill, every idea is a Lucrece. No idea ever escapes from his hands with

its virtue still intact. And even may we imagine that an idea might so elude his amorous befuddlement, we still cannot persuade ourselves to believe the man's apparently unconquerable bad manners would not work as complete havoc with the idea. I am getting very tired of employing the word "platitude," but Zangwill is platitude's John Philip Sousa. He waves his baton and an orchestra of platitudes begins to make *kammermusik*. Recall "The Melting Pot," that surge of pyrotechnic molasses and stupid blasphemy of common sense—with its valid basic idea riddled to pieces. Recall "The Next Religion" and "The War God." It has been truly said of Mr. Zangwill that he is an intelligent and enthusiastic public character who, as soon as he enters the theater, at once achieves the limit of vulgarity and silliness.

"PLASTER SAINTS" is a saturnalia of rhetoric which quickly sucks its theme down into oblivion. This theme is of the unreasonable attitude of a world which expects its clergy to be immaculate, sexually negative and yet as understanding of sin as were the lusty Saints Augustine and Francis. The playwright zangs away at his thesis with such yelling and florid mental gesticulation that the din becomes so deafening the lay auditor believes himself unable to hear Mr. Zangwill think. The auditor who has been there before, of course appreciates that Mr. Zangwill never thinks, and so merely slides down onto his shoulder blades and permits the volume of sound to thunder him to sleep. In his essay on "Noise," Schopenhauer mentions a poetical epistle in *terza rima* by the celebrated painter Bronzino, entitled "De Romori, a Messer Luca Martini," which gives a detailed description of the tortures to which persons are put by the various noises of a small Italian town. The philosopher recommends it, if I remember rightly, as the best argument against noise that he can bring to mind. Schopenhauer died in 1838. Zangwill was born in 1864.

Zangwill's leading character is a provincial clergyman of Nonconformist denomination who has a baby by his

secretary Felicia. The gentleman's wife in due time hears of the scandal, and insists that it is her spouse's duty to divorce her and marry the other woman. Also that it is his duty (a Zangwill play is always full of "duty" of one sort or another) to make a public confession. The end? Of course, news comes that a "rising young novelist" has married Felicia. Whenever a married man ruins a young lady in the drama it is an even break that his perplexity will ultimately be solved through one of these "rising young novelists." Why it should be, I do not seem to know, but on the stage rising young novelists are generally depicted as Act IV mouthpieces of "Let's say no more about it, dear. What happened, happened a long time ago—before you knew me. I love you. It doesn't matter." In real life, of course, sentimental, which is to say, "rising," young novelists are very often given to just this sort of thing; therefore we have the right to expect of a playwright that he use a little invention. As Shaw said in his address to the students at Oxford several months ago, "It is silly to urge that drama should reflect life. Life is not sufficiently dramatic to make drama. If it were, what would be the use of drama?" With Felicia and the baby satisfactorily disposed of, the pastor emerges as "one who, tempered by the winds of sin, will devote himself sympathetically to the uplift of mankind" or something to that usual effect.

Somewhere in the back paragraphs, I may or may not have observed that, in a vague way, there might be detected a *souçon* of something interesting in the play's theme before Zangwill began fooling with it. Here no room to go into the question. In a somewhat relevant way, though, may I wonder why it is that, in the United States particularly, continence and a professional talent are so widely believed to be impossible of disassociation? In other words, why is it that so many native noodles believe that the talented man who dallies with the ladies cannot be really so talented as the untalented man who does not?

Whatever may be the deficiencies of Mr. Monckton Hoffe in the matter of

playwriting, it remains that he possesses the faculty of inventing what is known on Broadway as "unnatural, no good" dialogue and what is, therefore, dialogue at once natural and very good. His latest play, "THINGS WE'D LIKE TO KNOW," until recently to be envisaged at the Apollo—in its first act especially—discovers this ability anew. This Broadway and, via Broadway, theatrical American attitude toward and conception of what constitutes good dramatic dialogue is a strange and awesome emotion. If one were to appraise American human beings by the ritual of their conversation as that ritual has been superimposed upon us by the majority of financially successful American dramatists, it would inevitably follow:

1. That it is not "natural" for an American to speak save in slang.
2. That it is "unnatural" for an American to be witty.
3. That it is not "natural" for an American ever to speak save in "short, crisp, snappy" sentences.
4. That it is "unnatural" for an American to speak a pure, grammatical English.
5. That an American only speaks "naturally" when he speaks in terms of "laughs."

Of course this contention on the part of the financially successful American dramatic writers is by no means so absurd as it may appear. It has, indeed, a considerable foundation of truth. But, as I have endeavored time and again to show, is it, in view of this fact, not the duty of our playwrights with dreams other than pelf (and should not one have such dreams once one has achieved the pelf?)—is it not their duty, or at least our two-dollar prayer, to entertain us in the theater (when they seek to manipulate American characters presumed to be rational, educated and mentally alert) with characters that speak something above the vulgar and arid jargon of grillrooms, dancing restaurants and cheap clubs? Hoffe, as I say, presents to our ear dialogue that neither drives us from the *fauteuils* with a laborious "building up of laughs" nor drives us down upon our spines with an equally laborious artillery of so-called "clever," and hence stupid, epigrams.

THIRTY-FIVE PRINTED PLAYS

By H. L. Mencken

DURING the first six months of my pastorate in this place—*videlicet*, from November, 1908, to April, 1909, inclusive—the published plays that came to me for review numbered exactly two, and one of them was so trivial that I got my notice of it into eighteen words. So rare, in that dark age, was the drama between covers! So small was the public appetite for reading plays! But during the half-year next succeeding there came a sudden jump from two plays to six, and with them came five volumes of dramatic criticism of more or less soundness; and ever since then there has been a steady increase in both departments, and as the number of books has multiplied their interest and value have augmented, until now it seems quite natural to look to the shelf of dramatics for the most significant literature of the day. At the moment, indeed, it fairly groans with good things, for on it, to continue with figures, I find no less than nineteen books of the play, comprising thirty-five separate pieces, and fully half of them are of that quality which entitles them to the utmost consideration and respect.

What is to become, alas, alas, of the dramatic critics? How is the estimable Nathan to keep body and soul together in his declining years, now so hard upon him? Between the bookstores and the moving picture parlors, the theaters are getting a squeeze that rids them of all their erstwhile juices. Those persons who formerly attended their sessions to weep, to be thrilled and to do obeisance to buxom and preposterous actors—such ingenuous persons now get their fill of inspiration at the movies, and for very much less money. And those who

went to the theater in search of food for thought, or at least of food for conversation, are now accommodated, more cheaply and more comfortably, in their own libraries.

What remains to the theater? *Imprimis*, the leg show, in one disguise or another. *Zum zweiten*, the circus side-show, as dancing, tightrope walking, animal training, juggling, skull cracking, clowning, etc. And *troisièmement*, the Opera, properly and improperly so-called. But even here, take notice, the signs of change are visible. The movies gobble the clowns and the wild beasts already, and the wrigglers and hill horses will be conquered on some near tomorrow. And over in Europe Dr. Richard Strauss is experimenting with a new and purified form of opera—an opera purged of fat tenors, snuffing sopranos and caterwauling contraltos—to wit, "The Legend of Joseph," awaiting only the perfect synchronization of cinema and phonograph to desert the Metropolitan for the far-flung town halls.

I myself, once the most diligent of theatergoers, have jammed my old bones into D 7 Right but twice in the past year, and both times it was to my regret. The first time I was robbed of my two dollars at a performance of—but let it go: I am willing to forgive and forget. The truth is that complete satisfaction in the theater is little more than a dream, a will-o'-the-wisp, an ideal never realized. Its attainment depends upon a collocation of talents and opportunities so improbable as to be virtually impossible, save perhaps as a rare miracle. It is easy enough to find an actor or an actress who can make a

fair showing in this part or that, but to find a company in which every member is of such capacity and in which the casting takes accurate account of each individual idiosyncrasy and limitation—to do this is to stumble upon an unexpected gift of the gods. Even the acknowledged stars are proverbially fond of tackling the roles that they play worst. Who will forget middle-aged Mansfield as sixteen-year-old Don Carlos—a spectacle to make the very ushers weep! And Alla Nazimova, the passionate Oriental, as Nora Helmer, the cold woman of the North! And Petruccio Sothern as the Dane! And Maude Adams as Chantecler—ah, woe! And Mrs. Fiske, the intellectual, as Hedda Tesman, the psychopathic! . . . And Tetrizzini as Violetta, dying dropsically of tuberculosis pulmonalis!!

But as I have argued in the past, and now argue again, such horrors need not be suffered by anyone who can read English print and has enough imagination to conjure up a boxed interior from a stage direction. This trick, moreover, is learned with surprising ease. The first time you read an unfamiliar play you may find it a bit difficult to visualize the scene, the properties and the movements of the characters, but after two or three trials you will know how to do it. The dramatists give increasing help by improving their directions. When Ibsen wrote "*A Doll's House*" and "*Ghosts*" he was content to put in an occasional [*Laughing*] or [*Looking at him*] or [*Going to the fireplace*], but by the time he got to "*Little Eyolf*" his text was so thickly strewn with such indications of stage business that scarcely a speech was without one. And George Bernard Shaw, as we all know, has carried the thing so far that his later pieces are almost as much stories as plays, for many of their interlarded observations are not stage directions at all but miniature essays (and not, indeed, always miniature!) upon the motives, emotions, morals, superstitions, vices, crimes and imbecilities of his characters. Where Ibsen and Shaw led, the other dramatists now follow. The play of today is its own stage manager. Try it and see.

No need to point out that the reading of plays multiplies enormously the number that one may enjoy in a season. It takes a whole evening to see even the cheapest farce on the stage; in the same time, and at half the expense, one may go through two such masterpieces as Hauptmann's "*The Weavers*" and Synge's "*The Playboy of the Western World*." The vast majority of really good plays, in truth, are never played in our theaters at all. The odds against them are too great; they cannot run the gauntlet of managers, actors, Comstocks, newspapers, flappers and tired business men. A regular theatergoer for twelve years, I saw but one play of Brieux's in all that time, and that one the worst. Pinero's "*A Wife Without a Smile*," perhaps the best of all his farces, was closed before I could get to it, and has never been revived. (I have read it four times, always with delight.) Of Ibsen's thirteen great social dramas, I saw but five, and three of them were atrociously acted. The Irish doused "*The Playboy*" before the Dublin company reached my town. To see Shaw's "*Mrs. Warren*" I had to go to Germany. Of Hervieu's plays I have seen but one; of Sudermann's but two; of Gorki's, Andreyev's, Barker's, Masefield's, Hankin's, Strindberg's, Wedekind's and Lavedan's, none. I know Schnitzler, Bahr and Echegaray (in the theater) only in adaptations—i. e., with wooden legs and false whiskers. I have never seen a single performance of a Restoration comedy, nor of any Elizabethan play save Shakespeare's.

Going through the nineteen play books before me, I quickly find that the most interesting plays they offer are precisely those which stand the least chance of being presented on our stage. For example, "*The Gods of the Mountain*," by Lord Dunsany, a fantasy so remote from reality that our beefy actors would kill it instantaneously. Again, Shaw's "*Misalliance*," a farcical extravaganza in one long act—too long, alas, for our thirsty theater patrons. And above all, Andreyev's "*The Life of Man*," a fine example of the Russian effort (*vide* Gorki's "*Lodgings for the*

Night") to break down the outworn conventions of the drama—but ruined for our theater in its very first scene, for a woman is having a child off stage, and the conversation of the old crones before us would bring up the smuthounds and boy scouts at a gallop. Andreyev is no stranger, even in English. His "Anathema," translated by Herman Bernstein, was published by the Macmillans four years ago. His "To the Stars," done into the vulgate by Dr. A. Goudiss, was to be had so long ago as 1907. But has he ever reached our stage? To be sure he has not.

"THE LIFE OF MAN" is printed with the same author's "SAVVA," and both are translated into fluent English by Thomas Seltzer (*Kennerley*). The former is scarcely a drama at all, at least in the actorial, A. B. Walkley sense, but a series of five loosely connected scenes, with but one character in common to the five of them. That character is simply A Man, or, as the translator makes it, Man—which is to say, any man, every man. In the first scene he is born; in the second he is a young husband, struggling for a foothold in the world; in the third he is successful and rich; in the fourth misfortune overtakes him, and in the fifth and last he is ruined, forsaken and dying. I said just now that Man himself is the only character who appears in all these scenes, but in truth there is another, to wit, Someone in Gray, and this Someone in Gray also appears in a short prologue, which he has all to himself. Who is he? Is he Deity, Omnipotence, the Christian God, the Mohammedan Allah? Or impersonal and inscrutable Fate, Kismet, Destiny? Andreyev leaves the answer to the theology of the reader. For him this mysterious and unintelligible watcher is merely Someone in Gray—the Button Moulder of "Peer Gynt," Man's eternal and unfathomable companion, dragging him relentlessly from the black void behind birth to the black void beyond the grave, tempting him with hopes and visions, tormenting him with cruel punishments, unmoved by his anguish, untouched by his delight, deaf to his prayers.

Why? Wherefore? To what end? What is the aim, the purpose, the inner meaning of this amazing and sordid farce? Andreyev, of course, has no answer to offer: he is a dramatist, not a theologian. But merely to ask the question, leaving it unanswered, is to voice a philosophy—to wit, the impregnable (if unsoothing) philosophy of the agnostic, the intellectual watchful waiting of the man who is not afraid to say "I don't know." The history of all religions is the history of bold and magnificent answers—not one of which answers. Here, indeed, the most civilized races have improved but little upon the childish guesses of the savage: there are just as many sound objections to the Judaic theory of a God of wrath and to the Christian theory of a God of love as to the West African theory of a Ju-Ju. It may be true, as the reverend expositors tell us, that life on this earth is no more than a preparation for the bliss to come, that Homer will get back his sight and "David his little lad," that a divine law of compensation works out its immutable rewards and penalties. But why prepare a man for bliss by putting out his eyes and breaking his heart? Why ground a doctrine of eternal justice upon such copious and staggering evidence of temporal injustice?

George Bernard Shaw, attempting to give dramatic form to the problem in "The Showing-Up of Blanco Posnet," managed only to outrage the piety of the English play censor. In a letter to Lady Gregory, printed in "OUR IRISH THEATRE" (*Putnam*), he proceeded to the folly of trying to answer it. Thus:

When Lady —, in her most superior manner, told me, "He is the God of love," I said, "He is also the God of cancer and epilepsy." That does not present any difficulty to me. All this problem of the origin of evil, the mystery of pain and so forth does not puzzle me. My doctrine is that God proceeds by the method of "trial and error," just like a workman perfecting an aeroplane. . . . He has tried lots of machines—the diphtheris bacillus, the tiger, the cockroach; and He cannot extirpate them, except by making something that can shoot them, or walk on them, or, cleverer still, devise vaccines and antitoxins to prey on them. To me the sole hope of human salvation lies in teaching Man to regard himself as an experiment in the realization of God, to regard his hands as God's hands, his

brain as God's brain, his purpose as God's purpose.

And so on and so on—pantheism in new words, Christian Science with a novel sauce, a ponderous begging of the question. More intelligible, and by far, is the Shakespearean answer that Shaw quotes a bit further on: "As flies to wanton boys, so we are to the gods; they kill us for their sport." Shaw denounces this answer as "the most frightful blasphemy ever uttered"—certainly not a relevant objection to it, for the one true answer, if we ever get it, is bound to seem blasphemous to the believers in every other answer, and blasphemy, after all, is nothing to be alarmed about, for all religions have their roots in it. But fortunately enough, there is no need to forfeit public esteem by practising it. If the orthodox answers fail to satisfy, there is always the provisional answer of Mark Twain, and, for that matter, of Andreyev himself—the answer that no answer is possible, the theory that life is essentially meaningless. This answer seems to make a subtle appeal to those who approach the problem from the side of the artist. Shakespeare inclines to it more than once, and it is constantly bobbing up in Ibsen and the Russians. And, as I have more than once pointed out, it is the ground idea, as the Germans would say, of such novelists as Conrad and Dreiser. Their view of life is entirely phenomenal; they leave its hidden causes to better guessers.

But here I wander into the thorny fields of theology, probably making an ass of myself at every step—and my original purpose was merely to praise Andreyev for showing how the drama can be made to deal with great things as well as small, and that without losing any of its beauty and mystery. His play is interesting, it is imaginative and it is sound in form, and yet its central theme belongs to the highest levels of human speculation. The trouble with ninety-nine percent. of the current plays is that they are utterly trivial—that they deal with situations and "problems" that no adult and educated male would waste five minutes in discussing. Even such renowned pieces as "The Second

Mrs. Tanqueray" and "Mrs. Dane's Defense" are of no importance at bottom—as P. P. Howe shows very clearly in his new book of "Dramatic Portraits." The alleged problems they set forth are problems which belong to gossip rather than to ethics. They are dramatizations of neighborhood scandals. Go back to the plays of the Robertson era and you will find a complete absence of any sense that the drama is capable of bolder flights. It was Ibsen, more than any other, who showed its capacity for getting nearer the heart of things. The Germans, aware of him early, hailed him as the "deepest-down-diving and most-mud-up-bringing" of dramatists. And where he led the way, such men as Galsworthy, Harkin, Hauptmann, Brieux, Shaw (in his serious moments), and above all, the Russians, have made more or less successful efforts to follow. But it will be years, of course, before they shoulder their way into our theaters—save, perhaps, as rare strangers, puzzling freaks. If you want to know what they are doing, you must read them in books.

"SAVVA," which comes in the same volume with "The Life of Man," is less serious in intent. Seeking a label for it, one may plausibly call it a sardonic comedy. It tells the story of a young Russian who plans to show his contempt for the national superstitions by blowing up a famous monastic church, to which the invalids of five provinces resort to be cured of their ills. The particular object of devotion in this church is a large ikon, or image of a saint, and so Savva decides to plant a bomb directly beneath it. But the shrewd monks, getting wind of his scheme, quietly remove the ikon before the bomb explodes. Immediately after the explosion they put it back—and there, unharmed amid the wreckage, it convinces all who have ever doubted, and the church is packed with pilgrims, and the healing trade grows ten times as prosperous as ever before; and as for Savva, he is kicked to death by a mob of irate believers. The humor of this curious piece belongs to the bitter brand of Dostoevsky; we have nothing quite like it in our Western literature.

And running through it there is always the old questioning, the refrain of the eternal riddle.

This Andreyev volume is number nine of "THE MODERN DRAMA SERIES" (*Kennerley*), discreetly chosen and intelligently edited by Edwin Bjorkman. Mr. Bjorkman is introducing a number of European dramatists whose work is well worth knowing, among them the Italian, Giuseppe Giacosa, and the Irishman, Lord Dunsany. Giacosa, who died in 1906, is chiefly known to England and America as the author, with Luigi Illica, of the libretti of "Tosca," "La Bohème" and "Madame Butterfly," but as Mr. Bjorkman's selection of plays shows, he was also a dramatist of excellent skill, and what is more important, of considerable dignity. His weakness was a tendency to account for his characters in terms of conventional morality. That is to say, he always kept pretty close to the habitual thinking of his audience, and particularly that part of it above the ground floor. But in compensation for this defect he showed a firm grip upon situation, a quite extraordinary sense of character, and at least in his later plays, a gratifying purpose to get away from the worn-out drama of adultery. The three pieces in the present volume are "Il Più Forte," "Come le Foglie" and "Diritti dell' Anima," translated as "The Stronger," "Like Falling Leaves" and "Sacred Ground" by Edith and Allan Updegraff, with an introduction by the translators. "Diritti dell' Anima," more accurately translated as "The Rights of the Soul," was played in this country, but only for a few performances, by Mary Shaw, and "Come le Foglie" had an American production at the hands of Donald Robertson. The third play, "Il Più Forte," has been done by the Drama Players in Chicago, and Olga Nethersole once took a hack at a fourth play, "Tristi Amori" (Sad Loves). But all these attempts led to nothing, and Giacosa has yet to be discovered by our alert managers.

A dramatist of far greater originality, if of less instinct for the theater, is Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett,

eighteenth Baron Dunsany. Dunsany is an Irishman and is commonly counted among the adherents of the Neo-Celtic movement, but as a matter of fact his connection with it is of the slightest. His plays are not peasant comedies of modern Ireland like those of Synge, Lady Gregory, Padraic Colum *et al.*, nor romances out of Irish legend like those of Yeats, but fantasies upon a plan he seems to have invented himself. Let "The Gods of the Mountain," a piece in three short acts, serve as a specimen. The scene is vaguely "the East," and the principal characters are seven roguish beggars. These beggars have fallen upon evil days: "there has been a comet come near to the earth of late and the earth has been parched and sultry, so that the gods are drowsy and all those things that are divine in man, such as benevolence, drunkenness, extravagance and song, have faded and died." What to do? One of the seven, Ulf by name, suggests a plan. Why not try a bold hoax? Why not get revenge upon the recreant gods by impersonating them and grabbing their revenues? More specifically, why not impersonate the seven green gods of the mountain, whom all the people worship blindly without ever having seen them?

The plan appeals to the other rascals, and they employ a thief to steal suitable costumes. Then, in godly array, they go into the city. But they are too shrewd, of course, to announce themselves in so many words, and thus challenge inquiry and suspicion. They know a far better plan than that. They go about the city apparently unconcerned, but all the while diligently talking god talk—referring casually to their sister, the moon; complaining of the ingratitude of humanity; hinting darkly about mysterious events to come. The people of the city do the rest. In an hour the rumor runs in all directions that the gods of the mountains are visiting their lieges incognito; by the end of the day the seven rogues are installed in magnificent quarters, and the pious are coming from near and far to worship them and flatter them and curry favor with them, and they are being stuffed

with the lordliest victuals the vicinage affords. And so it goes for several blissful days, perhaps more. The god business is vastly more agreeable than the begging business.

But then comes the inevitable agnostic, the higher critic, the fellow with pointed and embarrassing inquiries. At the start he is disregarded and even denounced, but by and by his questions begin to get attention. Can it be true that these greedy and boisterous fellows are really the green gods of the mountain? Suppose they are actually blasphemous impostors? Suppose it turns out, on investigation, that the gods of the mountain are still in the mountain? At once a couple of sharp fellows on dromedaries are sent out to look into it. They travel for days over the hot sands, into regions where few men have ever set foot. They come at last to the mountain. And then, full of news, they hasten back. The gods of the mountain are not in the mountain. *Ergo*, the seven rogues are genuine. (Ah, the logic of theology! The syllogism divine!) And so, triumphantly sustained, exculpated, acquitted, the seven face long lives of ease and honor. The faithful struggle to pay them tribute. They feast until their tummies are as tight as drumheads.

But in all this triumph there is still a touch of disquiet. No man can disbelieve utterly in the religion of his race and time; no man can shake himself wholly free from the ideas prevailing about him. And so the seven are pricked by conscience, that ancient handmaiden of the gods. "I have a fear," says Ulf, "an old fear and a boding. We have done ill in the sight of the seven gods." They withdraw into their sanctuary to talk it over. And then comes the final grotesquerie, the true Dunsanian touch. As they consult in whispers a heavy marching is heard outside, and presently there enters a file of seven green men. "They wear greenstone sandals; they walk with knees extremely wide apart, as having sat cross-legged for centuries; their right arms and forefingers point upward, right elbows resting on left hands." Who are these mysterious strangers? They are the real gods of

the mountain! And at once they inflict their terrible punishment and enjoy their terrible revenge. Each points his green forefinger at one of the shrinking impostors. The latter falls into the attitude of his accuser—and turns to green stone! Then the real gods vanish and the people come rushing in. They see the seven dead beggars—stiff, cold, petrified. They fall on their faces, contrite and panic-stricken. "We have doubted them! They have turned to stone because we have doubted them! They were the true gods!"

Maybe this will give you some notion of the peculiar quality of Dunsany's plays—the outlandish color in them, the mordant humor, the exuberant fancy, the amazing strangeness. And every one of the five in the book is just as far from the usual. This Dunsany, indeed, seems to have invented a wholly new type of drama, part extravaganza, part allegory and part comedy. And if you turn to two of his other books, "TIME AND THE GODS" and "THE BOOK OF WONDER" (*Luce*), you will find that he has also invented an entirely new type of story. To give you his formula in a few words is quite impossible. He mixes the fantastic and the commonplace in a way that, to me at least, is wholly new. His scenes, more than once, suggest the Arabian Nights, but in his themes, his situations and his *dramatis personæ* there is little to recall the Sultan Shahriyar and his garrulous bride. In one of the plays, for example, the only characters are two burglars—"both dead"! In one of the stories the action hinges on a golden dragon's kidnapping of "Miss Cubbidge, daughter to Mr. Cubbidge, M.P., of 12a, Prince of Wales Square, London, S. W." In another story young Thomas Shap, a clerk in the City, is crowned emperor of the Thuls, with a hundred and twenty archbishops, twenty angels and two archangels in his train. One is transported to strange countries—Zith, Zericon, Mluna, Moug, Averon, Bel-Narana. One meets men of strange names—Zarb, Argimenes, Darniak, Akmos, Illanaun, Oorander. Here, in brief, is something new under the sun, a world

of fancy unheard of until Dunsany explored it. No wonder Frank Harris, emerging from the first performance of "King Argimenes and the Unknown Warrior," in London, said, "It was one of the nights of my life."

Of the other volumes so far issued in "The Modern Drama Series" the most important is that containing two plays by Hjalmar Bergström, a Dane of the generation following Ibsen and Björnson. The work of this generation is less familiar to English-speaking readers than it ought to be. Such men as Bergström, Gustav Wied and Henrik Pontoppidan in Denmark, and Gunnar Heiberg, Johan Bojer, Peter Egge, Knut Hamsun and Thomas Krag in Norway have been slowly building up a national literature which does anything but discredit to its two great leaders. Most of these men (and working with them, by the way, are several very talented women) are what may be called general practitioners. That is to say, they turn from the drama to the novel and back again, and now and then venture into poetry, or even into history and criticism. Bergström, for example, published three novels and a volume of short stories before he wrote his first play. But of late he has even been pretty faithful to the stage. His "Lynggard & Co.," published in 1905, made him a celebrity overnight, and since then his "Karen Borneman" has given him the first position among living Scandinavian dramatists. Both plays are here presented, and both were decidedly worth translating. They are not thesis plays in any exact sense, but in each of them you will find that fundamental seriousness of aim, that determination to think the thing out, which is the best of all the legacies that Ibsen left to the drama of today.

And so, skipping over D. H. Lawrence's "THE WIDOWING OF MRS. HOLYKOD," a poignant tragedy of the poor, introducing a new dramatist who is bound to be heard from later on; and Arthur Davison Ficke's "MR. FAUST," a somewhat clumsy effort to pour old wine into new bottles; and a volume of three plays by Henry Becque, long ago

described and praised by James Huneker, and a new English version of Ibsen's "Peer Gynt," made by R. Ellis Roberts—so skipping, we emerge from "The Modern Drama Series" and come straightway upon four of the brown volumes of "THE DRAMA LEAGUE SERIES OF PLAYS" (*Doubleday-Page*). They are "HER HUSBAND'S WIFE," by A. E. Thomas; "THE SUNKEN BELL," by Gerhart Hauptmann; "THE GREAT GALEOTO," by José Echegaray, and "MARY GOES FIRST," by Henry Arthur Jones. The Thomas and Jones pieces are agreeable comedies, both keeping safely to the surface, but both extremely amusing. To the former Clayton Hamilton contributes an introduction which points accurately to its very considerable technical merits, but without attempting to read any profundity into it. At this sort of light satire, indeed, Jones is an undoubted master. You must go far to find anything to surpass his best comedies, particularly "The Liars" and "Joseph Entangled." Of the other two volumes, "The Great Galeoto" is the more important, for it is unquestionably the best play produced in Spain in modern times, and the only previous English version of it (setting aside Charles F. Nirdlinger's adaptation, "The World and His Wife"), has been out of print for several years. But why reprint Hauptmann's "The Sunken Bell," particularly from the old plates and with the old introduction (*circa* 1899), and burdened with a long and vapid "critical analysis" by Frank Chouteau Brown, apparently one of the officers of the Drama League of America? Imagine a critic who starts off with the doctrine that "Hauptmann has probably never been entirely at his ease in the theater"! How can anyone subscribe to such nonsense—after "Fuhrmann Henschel"? Where is there a dramatist who is *more* at ease?

The Drama Leaguers might well have spared themselves the printing of "The Sunken Bell," either with or without Mr. Brown's amazing commentary, for the play is included in volume four of the admirable Lewisohn-Huebsch edition of "THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF GERHART

HAUPTMANN" (*Huebsch*)—an edition that will run, I think, to six volumes. In this volume, besides "The Sunken Bell," one also finds "Henry of Auë," hitherto untranslated, and "The Assumption of Hannele." In volume three are "The Reconciliation" (*Das Friedensfest*), "Lonely Lives" (*Einsame Menschen*), "Colleague Crampton" and "Michael Kramer"—four social dramas of the very highest dignity and importance. What a man, indeed, is this Hauptmann! What a protean talent! How it has absorbed, digested and improved upon the ideas of other men—Zola, Arno Holz, Paul Heyse, Wilhelm Bölsche, Strindberg, Johannes Schlaf, Tolstoi, Ibsen, pioneers great and rebels small! There is nothing possible on the stage that he has not tried to do; there is no form of the drama that he has not attempted—and almost always with success. He has written beautiful verse and biting, acidulous prose. He has depicted great heroes and miserable wretches. He has done plays that will make you roar with mirth and plays that will make you blanch and shudder. No other dramatist of today—nor, for that matter, of any other day—can show such astounding versatility and virtuosity. Hauptmann lacks, true enough, the ultimate attribute of greatness: he has not, of his own motion, plowed up new ground. But what a splendid crop he has sown and reaped upon the ground plowed up by others! With what surpassing skill he has labored within his limitations!

And so, by way of "THE POST OFFICE," by Rabindranath Tagore (*Macmillan*), a pretty and pathetic little fancy, and "THE GAME OF CHESS" and "BARBARA," two highly artificial one-acters by Kenneth S. Goodman (*Vaughan-Gomme*), we come at last to our loud and bold friend, George Bernard Shaw. Is it time to add "tiresome"? For one, I protest against it. The formula of Shaw has become transparent

enough—a dozen other men now practise his trick of putting the obvious into terms of the scandalous—but he still works with surpassing humor and address. The long preface to "MISALLIANCE" (*Brentano*)—it runs to 121 closely printed pages, perhaps 45,000 words, a good-sized book in itself—is one of the best things, indeed, that he has ever done. He calls it "Parents and Children," but it really traverses the whole field of the domestic relations, with side trips into education, journalism, party politics, theology, criminology and sex hygiene. Reading it, you will be constantly chuckling, and glowing, and mummering "How true! How true!" This is the special function of Shaw, the steady business of his life: to say the things that everybody knows and nobody says, to expose the everyday hypocrisies, to rout platitudes with super-platitudes. And with what unflinching bounce and gusto he does it! What joy he gets out of the business!

As for the three plays in the book, they are diverting enough but will add little to his renown. "Fanny's First Play," which he dismisses sneeringly as a potboiler, is an excellent piece of nonsense, amusing alike on the stage and in the library, but "Misalliance," which deals brilliantly with all the problems of civilization in the course of one long act, comes in the end to inconsequence; and "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets," in which Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth are seen at grips, is no more than a clever piece of clowning. No, these new plays will not lift Shaw nearer Shakespeare; he has still to do anything better than the earliest fruits of his fancy—"Mrs. Warren," "Candida" and "Arms and the Man." But though he thus stands still as a dramatist, he yet remains a surpassing entertainer. You will not do much snoring over this latest book. It will tickle you and caress you and make you tingle with delight. It is bully good stuff.





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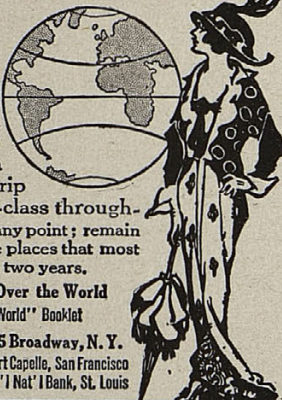
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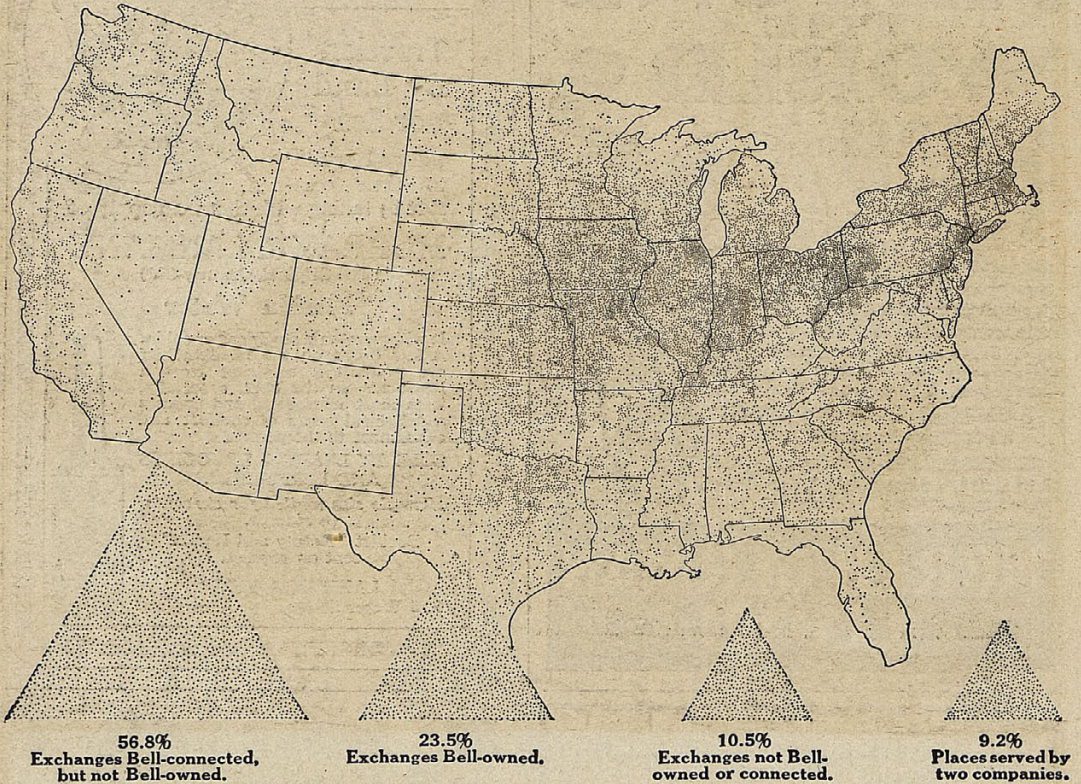
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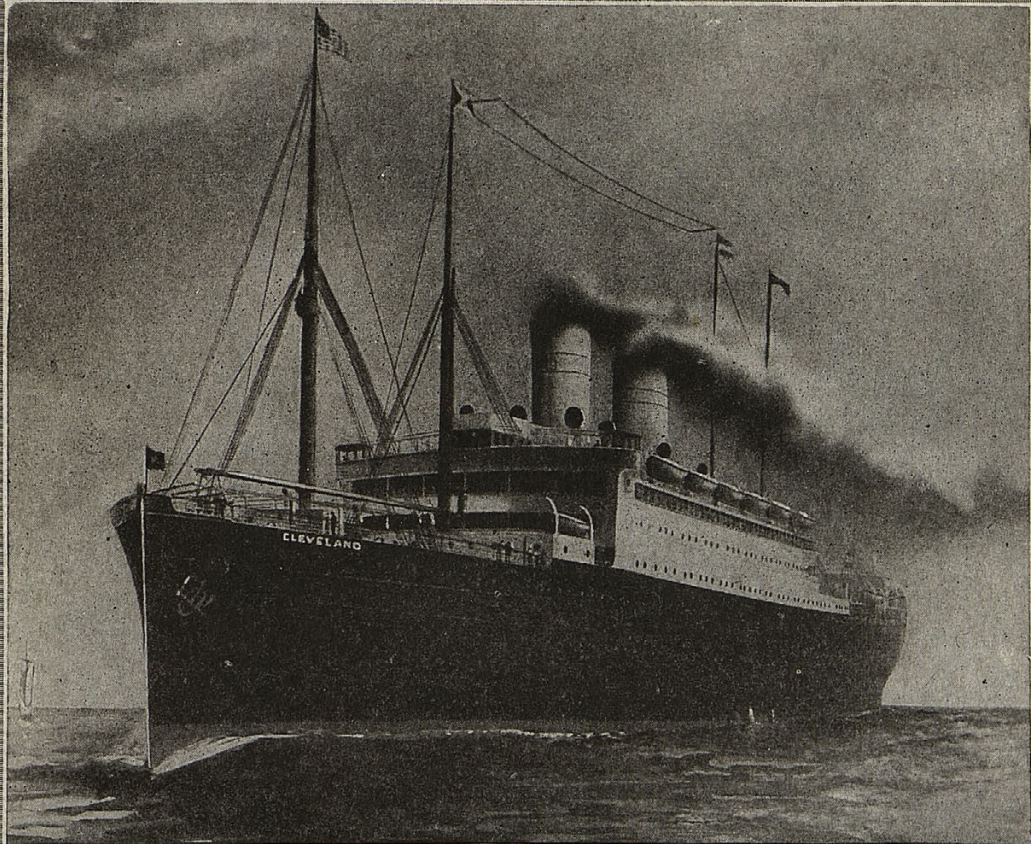


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